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CALGARY • WEEKEND, DECEMBER 19-21, 2008 metronews.ca

Celebrity pg 38

Potter star doesn't need cash



Motorists to face double whammy

TICKETING Soon drivers might face two tickets if they speed through inter-sections with red-light cameras.

The Alberta government has passed a rule that will allow red-light cameras to also catch speeders at any time, including on a green light. The new rule will come into effect Jan. 1, but there will be a three-month grace period before the tickets will become valid, giving motorists until April.

A red-light camera fine costs motorists \$287 currently, and radar speeding tickets cost anywhere from \$124 to \$264.

METRO CALGARY

Movies pg 30



Acting bogged down in new Seven Pounds

Comments pg 20

Suburbia gets no respect

Music pg 36



Tuning out the holidays



Santa **Coming to town**

Emma, 10, and her brother Ethan, 7, are super excited about Christmas coming and with less than a week left, they can't wait for the jolly old guy to bring them some gifts to open Christmas Day.

Road crews 'fatigued'

'Round-the-clock hours are catching up to workers

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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Abnormal amounts of snow keep drivers working 'round the clock.

City crews are working day and night getting the roads clear of snow, but are progressively growing fatigued, according to the roads department.

While the city has a minimum of 56 sanders and 33 graders on the road at any given time, a spokesperson for the roads department said there are others sitting idle.

"Crews are working 24 hours a day to clear the roads. It's not that we don't have enough drivers, it's just that the drivers are getting fatigued working day and night," Lori Boychuk said.

She says the city isn't used to getting this much snow — 31centimetres in about a week — in such a

short period of time.

"The amount of snow is making it difficult to keep up with the roads. We're certainly doing the best we can to keep the routes clear."

The roads department said labour legislation regulations are a factor in the amount of hours the crews can work, and while the roads department has extra equipment, it doesn't plan on hiring more staff at the moment. But that isn't resting

well with some Calgary motorists who are just getting sick of spinning their wheels, including Brian LeMoine.

"Does it not make sense that the largest city in the richest province in Canada should provide its people with drivable roads?" the frustrated driver said.

LeMoine says while he doesn't doubt the crews' hard work, he still thinks the city's slick roads are a waiting "death trap."

"The amount of snow is making it difficult to keep up with the roads. We're certainly doing the best we can to keep the routes clear."

Lori Boychuk

Rural hospital changes could reduce strain on city hospitals

NEIL MACKINNON
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A rural hospital's demise could be Calgary's gain, according to a new report.

An Alberta Health and Wellness-commissioned report, which among 13 other recommendations proposes transforming some rural hospitals into walk-in clinics, could revolutionize the way health care is pro-

vided in the province.

"Depending how it's organized and how the services will be delivered, it could be a very good thing," said University of Calgary professor Deb White.

"There could be a lot of implications, including increased access to services."

Health and Wellness' Howard May said any implementation of the re-

Health care

- Nearly half of the rural facilities in the province with 20 or fewer beds are within 50 kilometres of another hospital.

ports recommendations "is still a long ways away," but could eventually reduce the strain on facilities in the province's larger cen-

tres, like Calgary, whose occupancy is regularly over 90 per cent.

"There will likely be a two-way flow if rural hospitals are changed in that manner," said May.

"It could ease some of the burden on Calgary hospitals with patients using rural centres for rehabilitation. Or (for) acute-care patients who aren't ready to go home, a bed could be freed up by sending them

from Calgary to Okotoks, for example."

Many rural hospitals are under-utilized, the report said, with average occupancy rate under 75 per cent.

Without any changes, Alberta's health-care system cost could swell by \$16 billion in 2020 to \$24 billion annually.

ShareYourViews

calgaryletters@metronews.ca

Down the backstretch they come — 11 applicants are in the running to replace legendary Calgary Stampede chuck wagon announcer Joe Carbury. The Stampede will develop a short list and announce Carbury's replacement March 19 at the chuck wagon canvas auction. **METRO CALGARY**

Local



Zoo Year's Eve

Tickets are still available for Zoo Year's Eve at the Calgary Zoo on Dec. 31. Welcome in the New Year with friends, family and the bright lights of the Zoolights, including a 15-minute fireworks show. Tickets for the event are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children available at www.calgaryzoo.com. **METRO CALGARY**

Jury's out on another run for mayor in '10

Mayor Dave Bronconnier may seek another three-year term when the next municipal election rolls around in 2010, but the jury is out amongst Calgarians whether he's done enough to earn it. Marianne Lemke thinks it's time for Bronconnier to hit the bricks and should take a few current aldermen with him.

"He's just not practical enough," Lemke said. "He plays far too fast and loose with taxpayers' money and I don't think he earned his second or third term, so why

give him a fourth?"

Media reports swirled Thursday that Bronconnier would seek a fourth term. Mount Royal political scientist Keith Brownsey said the mayor must indicate that he's running again or risk abolishing his effectiveness in the city's highest office.

"He has to say he'll run again or he'll be seen as a lame duck," said Brownsey, who figures the mayor is in the midst of his final term.

NEIL MACKINNON/METRO CALGARY



Duncan To

age 19

"I don't know if he's earned it, but it's not like there's a whole heck of a lot of competition with people who could potentially beat him."



Ijaz Rahim

age 18

"He's done a great job at looking after the city's infrastructure needs, but whether or not he's earned it, that's tough. I guess it would depend on who's running against him."



Melissa Brown, 22, is headed on a hot trip, but abnormal weather to the south has her packing her winter clothes for travel, too.

Nice and ... snowy?

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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Usually people heading out on Christmas vacations to warm destinations pack bathing suits, but many at the airport Thursday had their tuques and winter coats, too.

That's because Calgarians heading to cities like Las Vegas this week are leaving a city full of snow to arrive in another city full of snow as Vegas recorded the white stuff for the first time in five years.

"Well, we didn't think it was going to be super hot,

"I'm going to New York and it's only -1, so that is a lot better than the -25 here."

Melissa Brown

but we certainly didn't expect snow when we got there," Calgarian Trisha Prokosch said.

Prokosch and her boyfriend still packed their bathing suits though, but had to add their winter clothes to the suitcase as well.

"We're there for four days, so hopefully it gets nicer," she added.

The Thaker family isn't

too worried about the snow though, they said it won't be too bad.

"At least it's better than here. And we already have the tickets so there isn't much we can do about it now," father Akshay laughed.

Most travellers at the Calgary International Airport agreed that even if their normally warm destination isn't as hot as normal, at least it's better than Calgary's weather.

"I'm going to New York and it's only -1 C so that is a lot better than the -25 C here," said Melissa Brown, 22, while standing in line bundled up in winter clothing.

Benefit for artist beaten last week

FUNDRAISER A benefit is taking place Saturday night for a Calgary renowned artist after he was viciously beaten in his home last week.

Tank Standing Buffalo was attacked in front of his wife Marsha Ellen Meidow, also a well-respected Calgarian. The fundraiser will be at Studio Pub at 922 Centre St. N to help raise money for the couple through their hard time. **METRO CALGARY**

News in brief

GRADUATION Calgary will graduate three classes of city protective services, with recruit graduation ceremonies being held today for Calgary Police Services recruits, Calgary Fire Department grads and those who have completed Calgary Transit's Public Safety and Enforcement training. **METRO CALGARY**

metronews.ca

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Calgary to get a new boutique hotel as once-hot condo market cools at metronews.ca/local
Video Students hand out 20 "homes in a bag" at the Mustard Seed at metronews.ca

ca/local Analysis
Politics 2008: From one "dys-functional" parliament to another at metronews.ca/canada



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Retail spending fell 0.9 per cent lower in October across Canada, according to a Statistics Canada report released Thursday. But in the Prairie provinces, including in Alberta, retail spending actually "rose mildly," according to the report. **METRO CALGARY**

Police warn about leaving cars running

SEASONAL THEFT You already cleared off your windows, started the car and it's been warmed up for 15 minutes before you leave for work.

The only problem is when you go to leave, your car is gone.

"I've seen that a lot. It's a crime of opportunity. I would never suggest anyone leave their car running outside without them in it," police crime prevention Sgt. Mark Dumont said.

With the cold temperatures and busy days of the holiday season Calgarians leave their cars running anyways. "It's just a false sense of security. Even if they don't steal your car, leaving it running makes it more inviting for them to break your window and steal stuff," he said.

But that doesn't stop Calgarian Jessica Johanson from warming up her car in the mornings. "I'm not worried it will get stolen because I lock it and use my spare key," she said.

KRISTA SYLVESTER/METRO CALGARY

Aldermanic promises

Be It Resolved continues with council's New Year's resolutions

NEIL MACKINNON
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They make daily decisions on the future of this city.

Between double-digit property tax hikes and \$25-million pedestrian bridges, the directions they take may not always be popular, but it certainly isn't easy work.

It's serious business. In a bid to lighten the holiday spirit, Metro asked city council for New Year's resolutions. Here's what they said:

Mayor Dave Bronconnier



Bronconnier



Colley-Urquhart

"I'm not going to build any more \$25 million pedestrian bridges in 2009."

Jim Stevenson, Ward 3

"Shorter council meetings"



Hodges



Stevenson

Ward 3 — Jim Stevenson
"I'm not going to build

Ward 1 — Dave Hodges

"I'm not in the resolution business, but I might switch to a more fashionable cell-phone, this BlackBerry's been around long enough."

any more \$25-million pedestrian bridges in 2009."



Jones

"I tried going with a handlebar mouse-tache once and it didn't turn out so well, so that can't be my resolution. This year I'm going to lose a few pounds."



Farrell

Ward 5 — Ray Jones
"I tried going with a handlebar mouse-tache once and it didn't turn out so well, so that can't be my resolution. This year I'm going to lose a few pounds."

Ward 9 — Joe Ceci

"I'm going to try and bond with the mayor more, we need more girls' nights out."

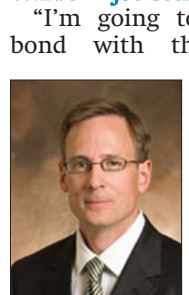
Ward 7 — Druh Farrell

"Council has committed to paperless



Ceci

Ward 11 — Brian Pincott



Pincott

Hodges gets a new BlackBerry, I resolve to secretly enable the e-mail function because he only uses it as a phone."

Ward 13 — Diane Colley-Urquhart

"I promise to be more outspoken."

agendas, I'm going to remember to take my mouse with me and think cats."

U of C professor named to budget advisory panel

ECONOMY University of Calgary professor Jack Mintz has been named to an 11-member economic advisory committee intended to inform the federal government on the spiraling economy and the upcoming budget.

Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said the group will meet Tuesday in Toronto and will be working with the government for one year.

METRO CALGARY

Red light runner acquitted on death

DRIVING A driver who ran a red light and killed a woman and injured her 12-year-old daughter two years ago was acquitted Thursday of dangerous driving.

Muheiddine Tala Ismail, 31, was acquitted of two charges stemming from the Oct. 16, 2006, collision on 52 Street NE and Whitehorn Drive NE that killed Nazira Juma, 53 and left her daughter Ateefa in hospital.

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Last-minute shopping rush

KRISTA SYLVESTER
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As long as Christmas has been around, there have been last minute shoppers and this weekend is sure to be a frenzy at the city's malls.

Peggy Lee, spokesperson for Chinook Centre, the city's largest shopping centre, said with schools out today at noon, there is sure to be a rush of last minute shoppers.

"Usually that means the

"Gift cards are popular. It's a gift of choice." Peggy Lee

traffic in here picks up a lot, and with it being the last weekend before Christmas, we're definitely anticipating it to be busy," Lee said.

Shoppers should remember it's supposed to be fun and Lee has some tips for Calgarians to help ease the shopping spree experience, she said. "Try to use the back roads and back parking lot. If you're stuck for

ideas just ask retailers for great gift ideas," she said.

And if all else fails? "Gift cards are popular. They give the recipient the option and it's a gift of choice."

Father-of-three Richard George leaves his shopping to the last minute every year and says every year, he regrets it.

"I always end up coming just days before, and I have to wait in line at least two hours to get gift cards. But I have three girls so I have no idea what else to get them," he laughed.



Time is ticking down for Christmas shoppers, but Megan Johnson, 21, took some time to load up on Christmas presents at Chinook Mall knowing that time is running out to find that perfect gift.

18-wheeler helps boost food drive

HUNGER Calgarians might notice the thunderous sound of an 18-wheeler rolling through the city, but it's just the wheels of Hope against hunger drive.

The massive 53-foot truck is heading to the Calgary Food Bank driven by Santa himself with almost 40,000 pounds of food to help feed hungry Calgarians.

It's the sixth year in a row the wheels of hope have donated to the food bank.

Calgarian blogs way to award

HONOUR Mike's Bloggity Blog has done, done it again.

For the second year in a row, the Calgary blogger has been recognized as one of Canada's most entertaining blogs.

"This has definitely been a great year for me," founder Michael Morrison said of the honours.

Morrison started the blog in 2006 and then took Best Entertainment Blog in 2007 and 2008. The blog has also

been recognized for its creativity in Best Canadian Blog, coming in 5th out of 75 nominees.

"The blog has become bigger than I ever dreamed and it's helping people related to the crazy world of international entertainment," he added.

Mike's Bloggity Blog has covered such events as the Juno Awards hosted here in Calgary this year as well as commentary on reality television shows. **METRO CALGARY**

'Lenient' sentences may prompt change

NEIL MACKINNON
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ANIMALS It may seem strange for an animal rights group to applaud "entirely too lenient" sentencing in a pair of high profile abuse cases, but the Daisy Duke Foundation did just that Thursday.

"If anything, sentences like this get more and more people infuriated," said Daisy Foundation

founder Heather Anderson. "People are outraged and it helps us build a case that there has to be some drastic changes to this country's animal abuse legislation."

Daniel Haskett was sentenced to 30 days in jail to be served on weekends in a case that drew international attention.

The court heard that Haskett duct taped his dog Daisy Duke's mouth, put a plastic bag over her head

and a rope around her neck. He then dragged the dog for several blocks behind a vehicle in what the court found was an attempt to euthanize the animal after one of Haskett's friends ran it over.

In another sentencing hearing, the men responsible for starving 100 horses near Vegreville were handed a combined \$18,000 fine and were prohibited from owning horses.

Golf course looks to fence out elks

REPORT Parks Canada and Fairmont Banff Springs are examining the possibility of fencing fairways to reduce the risk of elk tearing up the golf course. Normally fencing isn't allowed in the Banff National Park, but Parks Canada has asked an advisory group for feedback.

About 20 elk have called the golf course home this past summer.

METRO CALGARY

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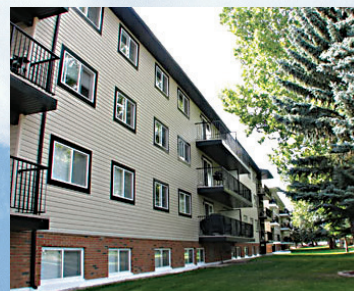
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(1) Excludes premium messages. Includes international text and picture messages. (2) Unlimited local calling from 7pm to 8am, Monday through Thursday and from 7pm Friday to 8am Monday. (3) Taxes are extra.

Four people died and three were injured in a fire in Nipawin, Sask., on Wednesday night. A six-year-old boy and his twin sister died. A woman, 21, and a man whose age is unknown also perished. A woman, 30, was rescued from the blaze and airlifted to a hospital in Saskatoon. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada



Legal battle brewing

The president of AbitibiBowater says the Montreal-based newsprint giant will fight to protect its interests in central Newfoundland, following the provincial government's decision to expropriate timber and hydro resources. Premier Danny Williams, left, said Bill 75, which was passed quickly this week in the house of assembly, was a necessary move to safeguard the province's natural resources.

CBC NEWS ONLINE

Spy agency listening in

CSIS monitoring phone calls between terror suspects and their attorneys

Canada's spy service has been listening to telephone conversations between terrorism suspects and their lawyers for the past 18 months as part of a strict monitoring program developed by the government.

The revelation yesterday enraged defence lawyers who argue that intercepting these calls breaches the fundamental right of solicitor-client privilege.

"I feel as though my house was broken into," said Toronto lawyer Barb Jackman. "It's incredibly

"It is a privilege of the highest order and protected at the highest levels. It is a principle of fundamental justice itself."

Marlys Edwardh, lawyer

invasive."

The issue arose in the case of Egyptian refugee Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub, who is accused of conspiring with al-Qaida and has fought the government's attempts to deport him for the past eight years.

Mahjoub's case is one of five under the controversial immigration law

known as "national security certificates."

In April 2007, Mahjoub was released on stringent bail conditions after seven years in custody. Mahjoub's lawyers recently became concerned that their calls were also being monitored and pressed for answers.

On Wednesday, a senior agent with the Canadian

Security Intelligence Service testified in a secret Ottawa hearing that the agency was monitoring calls on behalf of the Canadian Border Services Agency.

Justice Carolyn Layden-Stevenson released a two-page public summary of the testimony this morning in a Toronto courtroom. It noted that calls to lawyers are monitored, "to the extent of being satisfied that the communication does not involve a potential breach of the terms of release or a threat to na-

tional security."

"It is a privilege of the highest order and protected at the highest levels," said Jackman's co-counsel, Toronto lawyer Marlys Edwardh, regarding communication between lawyers and their clients. "It is a principle of fundamental justice itself."

Edwardh said she cannot continue with the case until lawyers' calls are no longer monitored and planned to ask Justice Layden-Stevenson for an order on Friday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cold medicines not safe for kids under 6, says Health Canada

WARNING Health officials urged parents Thursday not to give over-the-counter cold medicines to children under the age of six, citing concern over misuse and overdoses.

Health Canada, which had earlier this year recommended the medicines not be given to children less than two years old, said there is limited evidence that the medications have any effectiveness for young children.

Health Canada asked a scientific panel to review the issue this year, and said that the panel found

Safe?

• Drug companies maintain that nonprescription products are safe when used as directed.

that in addition to concerns of misuse and overdoses there were reports of rare but serious side effects from the treatments.

Health Canada said manufacturers will be required to change their labels on the medicines next year, and studies will continue on proper dosing levels for children.

REUTERS

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Only first steroid dose helps babies: Report

HEALTH Giving pregnant women at risk of preterm delivery multiple doses of steroids rather than a single injection does not improve the premature babies' survival rates, according to a new study.

The paper, written by a team of Toronto researchers and published in the journal Lancet, found mothers who receive multiple courses of antenatal corticosteroids have an increased probability of giving birth to an infant who weighs less, is shorter in length, and has a smaller head circumference. The authors recommend the elimination of this common medical practice.

Long-term physical and developmental side effects of such outcomes on children are unknown and still being investigated, said Dr. Kellie Murphy, an obstetrician, who led the study.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa Transit strike drags on



University student Pete Beaulieu and around 20 other union supporters joined striking transit workers on the picket lines Thursday morning. Supporters say the city, under Mayor Larry O'Brien's leadership, should be blamed for the labour strife.

News in brief

GUILTY PLEA A Quebec man has pled guilty to several charges, including drunk driving, after his car struck a woman who was out in her wheelchair taking her dog for a walk, CBC News Online reports. Roger Walsh, 56, appeared in a Valleyfield courtroom Thursday to plead guilty to charges of hit-and-run and impaired driving. The accident occurred in October in the quiet, rural community of Les Cèdres, west of Montreal. Anee Khudaverdian was celebrating her 47th birthday. The dog survived.

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B.C. man Tooryalai Wesa, 58, accepted Afghan President Hamid Karzai's offer for the top political posting in the troubled province where Canada's troops are deployed. He'll be sworn in on Saturday. Wesa, his wife and three children and have lived in Coquitlam, B.C., for 13 years. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Maple Leaf settles for \$25M

Meat company ends class-action suit with victims of listeriosis outbreak

When lawyers began filing class-action lawsuits against Maple Leaf Foods in August claiming thousands of people had suffered from eating listeria-tainted cold cuts, company president Michael McCain fired back.

In internal e-mail memos to staff, McCain dismissed class-action lawyers and painted some of the self-professed victims as opportunists making the "faintest, thinnest of claims of so-called emotional stress or illness (tummy ache stuff)."

That tone changed yesterday when Maple Leaf settled the class-action lawsuit with victims of the listeria outbreak, committing to pay between \$25 million and \$27 million in compensation. Under the agreement, victims of listeria-induced stomach aches stand to receive potentially thousands of dollars from the company.

"Our goal throughout this legal process has been to negotiate a fair and early set-



A staff member cleans the slicers at a Maple Leaf plant in Toronto. The company reached a deal with thousands of people involved in a class-action lawsuit Thursday. The settlement is said to be valued between \$25 million and \$27 million.

tlement so that we can obtain court approvals and promptly compensate families who were affected," McCain said in a statement issued Thursday. "This was a tragic experience and I want to acknowledge the

co-operation of all the parties involved to ensure that people affected receive timely restitution."

The settlement still requires court approval in Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan. The Ontario ap-

proval hearing is to be heard early next year.

Ted Charney, a Toronto lawyer who represented some claimants, said the settlement came quickly thanks to co-operation on both sides.

"Our goal throughout this legal process has been to negotiate a fair and early settlement."

Michael McCain, Maple Leaf president

Members of the lawsuit will receive widely varying compensation depending on the severity of their injuries.

At the low end, listeria-triggered illnesses lasting a day or two will be eligible for a \$750 payout. Those who suffered illnesses lasting two weeks to a month will be entitled to \$8,000 plus any loss of income and \$750 a day for hospitalization.

Payouts of \$120,000 will go to the estates of those whose death symptoms were consistent with listeriosis, plus funeral expenses, \$35,000 to their spouses, \$30,000 for each of their children and \$20,000 for their parents.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CFIA holding back listeria documents

INFORMATION Thousands of pages of documents detailing the federal government's handling of this summer's listeria outbreak are being withheld.

Torstar News Service and the CBC are seeking the records, which include e-mails sent between officials with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Maple Leaf Foods and the City of Toronto through an access to information request.

Citing the sheer volume of documents requested, the department says it is short-staffed and can't produce the information any faster.

None of the records first requested four months ago have been released.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

30 days

- While the federal act stipulates a 30-day time limit for responding to information requests, there is no penalty for ministries that fail to meet that deadline.



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Bailout, massive deficit expected in budget

Prime Minister Stephen Harper plans a major stimulus package to rescue the economy that will drive the federal budget deficit to between \$20 billion and \$30 billion next year.

The massive spending the Conservatives have in mind includes a bailout

package for the struggling Big Three North American automakers, according to a senior government official.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who vowed during the election campaign never to run a budget deficit, now says the extra spending is needed in response to the

Bigger than before

- The deficit spending being eyed by Harper goes far beyond the estimates Flaherty released on Wednesday,

unexpectedly deep recession and demands from

which suggested the government would have a shortfall of approximately \$5 billion in 2009-2010.

Canadians to help them cope with the global eco-

nomics crisis.

Much of the plan to strengthen and stabilize the economy will be focused on federal spending to help cities build and repair urban infrastructure.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has said infrastructure spending next year will

probably exceed the \$6 billion that the Conservatives have already promised.

But the government also wants to spend more on social housing and skills training, and do everything possible to keep Canadians working during the downturn.

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EU farm ministers overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to lift Europe's 11-year ban on U.S. poultry imports, despite strict conditions designed to ensure consumer safety. A dispute over chlorine-washed chickens has soured the European Union's relations with the United States, its largest trading partner, since the EU embargo was imposed in 1997. **REUTERS**

World



Breakfast eaters healthier

Breakfast may be the most important meal of the day — as long as that meal is not a doughnut, according to a new study. In a survey of U.S. adults, researchers found that people who ate lower-calorie foods for breakfast tended to have a better diet overall. Men who ate a healthy breakfast generally weighed less. Among women, breakfast eaters — regardless of the food involved — tended to weigh less. **REUTERS**

Russian liberals condemn laws

Russian liberals have appealed to President Dmitry Medvedev to veto a set of new laws they say could lead to purges reminiscent of the Stalin era.

The government has submitted to parliament, which is dominated by the pro-Kremlin United Russia party, a bill that broadens the interpretation of treason and espionage to include the vague definition of "acts against the constitutional order."

Opponents say this could open the door to arbitrary trials against dissenters at home, whereas the narrower definition was used exclusively to describe co-operation with foreign intelligence services.

In another move that has scared Russian liberals, parliament adopted a law under which a single judge rather than a jury will decide in trials of treason, espionage, terrorism, hostage-taking, mutinies, sab-

"Thanks to these amendments, anyone who has drunk coffee with a secretary of a foreign embassy can be nabbed."

Dmitry Oreshkin, independent political analyst

otage and civil unrest.

"Jury trials, as a rare element of civil society's control over courts, have been blatantly stolen to favour secret services," leading liberals said in a letter published in the independent Novaya Gazeta paper.

"Dozens of innocent people could be jailed or evicted," they said in the letter.

Russian human rights campaigners accuse former president Vladimir Putin of backtracking on democratic reforms and turning Russia into a po-

lice state.

"Thanks to these amendments, anyone who has drunk coffee with a secretary of a foreign embassy can be nabbed, just like me for talking to you," independent political analyst Dmitry Oreshkin told Reuters.

By adopting tougher laws the Kremlin could be seeking to keep a lid on dissent, fearing outbursts of social anger as the global crisis bites. **REUTERS**

U.S. military head briefs Obama on Iraq troop plans

WAR The top U.S. military officer briefed president-elect Barack Obama this week on commanders' plans for troop levels in Iraq, the Pentagon said Thursday.

Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell would not say whether the plans matched Obama's stated desire to get all U.S. combat forces out of Iraq in 16 months, although commanders have previously advocated a cautious approach to troop cuts.

Obama's opposition to the Iraq war was a major part of his election campaign, but he has also said he wants a responsible withdrawal and will listen to the advice of his commanders. **REUTERS**

Keep ties with Russia, Bush urges successor

POLITICS Preparing to leave office, U.S. President George W. Bush yesterday advised his successor to try to stay friends with Russia despite disagreements.

"There's common interest and there's going to be a lot of tensions," Bush said at the conservative American Enterprise Institute think tank.

"The president has got to be in a position where he can deal with those tensions in a way that doesn't send chilling signals with other allies."

While not mentioning president-elect Barack Obama directly, Bush has recently emphasized efforts he says his successor

"There's common interest and there's going to be a lot of tensions."

George W. Bush

should continue.

Bush famously said after meeting then-president Vladimir Putin in 2001 that he trusted the Russian leader after gaining a "sense of his soul."

Putin, who is now prime minister but still thought to effectively run the country, later clashed with Bush on several issues and took steps U.S. officials saw as counter to democratic reforms. **REUTERS**

Paris Demanding release of political prisoners



Singer Jane Birkin speaks as, from left, Tina Kieffer, editor of French women's magazine Marie-Claire, and French-Algerian director Yamina Benguigui listen at a protest Thursday in Paris demanding the freedom of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

Hamas declares ceasefire with Israel finished

GAZA Hamas declared an end to a six-month-old Egyptian-brokered ceasefire with Israel in the Gaza Strip, raising the prospect of an escalation in cross-border fighting.

"The calm is over," Hamas official Ayman Taha said after talks with Palestinian factions in the coastal enclave controlled by the Islamist group.

He said the ceasefire, which Hamas says was scheduled to expire Friday, would not be renewed "because the enemy did not abide by its obligations" to ease a blockade of the Gaza Strip. Hamas stopped short of threatening an immediate escalation against Israel. **REUTERS**

News in brief

CRIME The founder of Italian dairy group Parmalat was sentenced to 10 years in jail for market-rigging in a trial yesterday over the company's 2003 collapse, while all other defen-

dants were acquitted. Calisto Tanzi, who was also the company's chief executive, was among eight former executives and bankers on trial in Milan for market-rigging or

obstructing market oversight. **GUANTANAMO** The Pentagon is working on a proposal to shut the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, that would be available to

president-elect Barack Obama once he takes office, a defence official said yesterday. U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates asked his staff to come up with a plan to address the thorny

issue of how to close the prison — which houses about 250 detainees in southeast Cuba — that Obama has pledged to shutter after he officially enters the White House. **REUTERS**



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The last statue of former dictator Francisco Franco on public display in mainland Spain was removed from view on Thursday, 33 years after his death began the country's transition to democracy. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed in the three-year-long civil war started by Franco. **REUTERS**

Inquiry backs Georgian Prez's attack

A Georgian parliamentary inquiry has said the military conduct of its August conflict with Russia was flawed but backed President Mikheil Saakashvili's attack on the breakaway South Ossetia region.

The report echoed domestic criticism of the military performance in the five-day war in which the Russian army drove Georgian security forces from pro-Moscow South Ossetia.

But the findings, published Thursday, supported Saakashvili's decision to launch an air and ground assault on the rebel capital Tskhinvali on Aug 7.

REUTERS

Illinois refuses to pay for governor's defence

The top legal officer in Illinois told Gov. Rod Blagojevich on Thursday the state will not pay for his defence against charges he tried to sell President-elect Barack Obama's vacated U.S. Senate seat.

The Democratic governor had piled up significant legal bills from a five-year federal investigation even before being charged last week that he conspired to bribe and commit fraud in a scheme to swap political favours, including the choice of Obama's replacement, for cash, jobs or other considerations.

Federal prosecutors may also try to freeze the gover-

Impact on Obama

- The scandal has been a distraction for Obama and his team as he announces cabinet choices and lays out plans for dealing with the recession and other crises once he becomes president Jan. 20. Obama is not implicated in the case.

nor's \$3 million US-plus campaign fund so he cannot use it for his defence, Blagojevich's lawyer Edward Genson said.

Through his lawyers the two-term governor, 52, has denied any wrongdoing and shown no willingness

to resign.

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, also a Democrat, issued a letter signed by her chief of staff telling Genson the state will not pay to defend Blagojevich against either the criminal charges or the impeachment inquiry now in its third day in the state legislature.

"It is absurd to suggest that taxpayers must finance the defence of a criminal action against Gov. Blagojevich, who is accused of corruptly betraying the public trust for personal and financial gain," the letter said.

REUTERS

France Christmas party time



France's first lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy attends the traditional Christmas party at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Thursday.

News in brief

MIDEAST The door is open for direct talks between Israel and Syria and a peace deal between the two longtime foes is achievable, outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said on Thursday. He spoke two days before flying to Turkey to discuss indirect Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

REUTERS

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Saudi, Norway among Bill Clinton donors

FUNDING The governments of Saudi Arabia and Norway and billionaires Bill Gates and Haim Saban are among the biggest donors to former U.S. president Bill Clinton's foundation, a list released on Thursday showed.

Clinton made public the

names of about 200,000 contributors to his foundation since it was formed in 1997, as part of a deal with president-elect Barack Obama to clear the way for his wife Hillary's nomination as secretary of state and to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest.

The money funded Clinton Foundation initiatives on HIV/AIDS, climate change, a philanthropic summit and the construction of the Clinton Presidential Library in Arkansas.

The list is at www.clintonfoundation.org/contributors.

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Tribunal seeks joint war trial

The UN war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia hopes wanted Bosnian Serb Ratko Mladic can be caught in time to put him on trial with his old political leader Radovan Karadzic, the chief prosecutor said Thursday.

The tribunal faces an informal deadline to wrap up proceedings by 2012, rising costs, staff departures and two fugitives still on the run, while preparing for the trial next year of its top-ranking detainee, Karadzic, for genocide.

If Mladic, Bosnian Serb military chief during the 1992-95 war, were captured before the start of Karadzic's trial, the case against him could be "swiftly joined" and they could be tried more effi-

Background

- Arrested in July in Belgrade, where he had assumed a new identity and worked as an alternative healer, Radovan Karadzic faces 11 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide over the 1995 Srebrenica massacre of 8,000 Muslims.

ciently together, prosecutor Serge Brammertz told reporters in The Hague.

"This is the only good solution," he said.

Both suspects are accused of genocide.

Mladic is believed to be in Serbia, protected by nationalist hardliners.

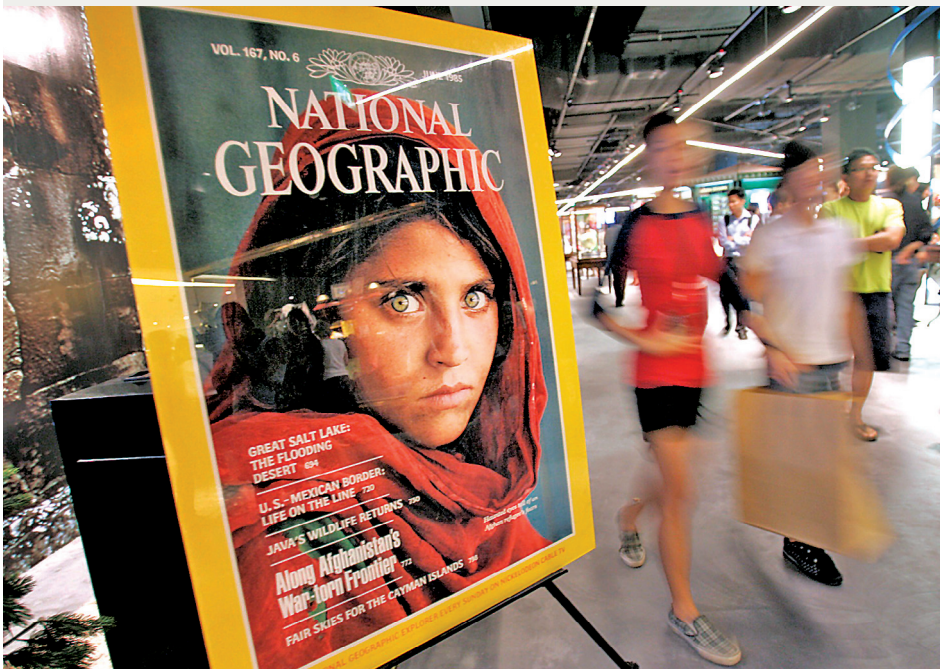
REUTERS

News in brief

POLITICS Cuban President Raul Castro offered yesterday to release political dissidents in exchange for the release of five convicted Cuban spies in U.S.

prisons, seeking to ease ties with the United States in anticipation of the Obama administration's upcoming takeover of the White House. **REUTERS**

Singapore Tapping the gateway city



Shoppers walk past the National Geographic Asian store at a mall in Singapore yesterday. National Geographic opened its first Asian store in Singapore this week, saying it was drawn to the gateway city to tap growing overseas travel by people in the region.

Iraq remains deadliest place for journalists

FINDINGS Iraq remained the deadliest country for journalists in 2008 for the sixth consecutive year with 11 journalists killed, according to an annual analysis by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

All those killed this year were local reporters working for domestic news outlets. That was down from a record 32 deaths in Iraq in each of the prior two years, according to the group.

Worldwide, 41 journalists were killed this year in connection to their work, down from 65 deaths last year, the New York-based nonprofit organization said Thursday. Another 22 deaths are being investigated to see if they were work-related.

Conflicts in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and India claimed the lives of a total of 13 journalists.

The group also counted three deaths each in Thailand and in the fighting between Russia and Georgia. **REUTERS**

Lawyers, others line up to probe Madoff scandal

U.S. The Bernard Madoff scandal has spurred a flurry of court action and investigations as authorities scramble to get to the bottom of the suspected fraud.

Among those sorting through the case are Marc Litt, the assistant U.S. attorney who was named the federal prosecutor on the Madoff case after the money manager's arrest

for securities fraud; Ira Sorkin, one of several attorneys representing Madoff; and Irving Picard, who is overseeing the liquidation of Madoff's firm.

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UN divided over decriminalization of homosexuality

The UN split over gay rights Thursday after a statement calling for decriminalization of homosexuality prompted one opposing it. **REUTERS**

world **19**

Life-supporting water discovered on Mars

Mineral evidence for a water environment capable of supporting life has been discovered on Mars, scientists said Thursday.

Deposits of carbonate, formed in neutral or alkaline water, were spotted by NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, the scientists told a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco.

"Obviously this is very exciting," said John Mustard of Brown University in Rhode Island.

"It's white — it's a bulbous, crusty material."

Carbonate is formed

"Obviously this is very exciting."

John Mustard

when water and carbon dioxide mix with calcium, iron or magnesium. It dissolves quickly in acid, so its discovery counters the theory that water on Mars was at one time acidic.

"It would have been a pretty clement, benign environment for early Martian life," said Bethany Ehlmann, a graduate student at Brown University who led the study pub-

lished in the journal Science.

"It preserves a record of a particular type of habitat, a neutral to alkaline water environment."

Carbonates on Earth like chalk or limestone sometimes preserve organic material, but scientists have found no such evidence on Mars. The 3.6 billion-year-old carbonate was discovered in bedrock at the edge of a 930-mile-wide crater.

The deposits are about the size of football fields and are visible in images taken by the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. **REUTERS**

South Korea Training day



JO YONG-HAN/REUTERS

A middle school student adjusts his steel helmet yesterday during a winter military camp for civilians organized by the Marine Corps at a military training field in Gimpo, about 30 kilometres northwest of Seoul. Fifty-five high school and middle school students are taking part in the four-day camp to strengthen their spirits and bodies.

America not prepared for 'cyberwar': Officials

SIMULATION The United States is unprepared for a major hostile attack against vital computer networks, government and industry officials said Thursday after participating in a two-day "cyberwar" simulation.

The game involved 230 representatives of government defense and security agencies, private compa-

nies and civil groups. It revealed flaws in leadership, planning, communications and other issues, participants said.

The exercise comes almost a year after President George W. Bush launched a cybersecurity initiative which officials said has helped shore up U.S. computer defenses but still falls short. **REUTERS**

Male dinos raised kids, report says

SCIENCE You can call it dino daddy day-care.

Scientists who examined the remains of three types of medium-sized dinosaurs found with large clutches of eggs have concluded that males, rather than females, seem to have guarded the nests.

In the journal Science, they said this behavior is seen in certain species of birds. Scientists believe birds evolved from small, feathered dinosaurs more than 150 million years ago.

The three types of dinos lived roughly 75 million years ago and were theropods — the primarily meat-eating group that includes beasts like Tyrannosaurus rex. **REUTERS**

News in brief

PHARMACEUTICALS Eli Lilly & Co and Daiichi-Sankyo's new blood clot preventer prasugrel won a major endorsement from international regulators on Thursday when the European Medicines Agency recommended its approval. A

panel of experts at the London-based watchdog said the drug was suitable for use in preventing clots in patients who are to undergo percutaneous coronary intervention, or PCI, a procedure to widen narrowed arteries. **REUTERS**

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Comment & Views

Comment

The suburban appeal

OmniVision



Suburbia has been, for three generations at least, the social equivalent of pork rinds or supermarket tabloids — something no one has a good word for, though it continues to exist, even thrive, in spite of blanket condemnation by those who “know better.”

Moviegoers are getting a chance to revisit this spacious, tree-lined hell this Christmas with the release of *Revolutionary Road*, the Oscar favourite that reunites Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio, and allows director Sam Mendes to take another swing at

the same target he savaged almost a decade ago with *American Beauty*.

Based on Richard Yates' 1961 novel, it's the story of the Wheelers, Frank and April, who have somehow managed to take up residence in that epicentre of middle-class despair — the post-war, northeastern commuter suburb — while presuming themselves much better than the “hopeless emptiness” they see everywhere. Or not — there wouldn't be much of a story if they didn't realize, with a shock, that they've become trapped in that most awful of mid-century nightmares (in mid-century novels, at least): Material comfort and routine.

Yates' book was one of

the first to define the conventional wisdom on suburbs, a viewpoint voiced almost entirely by people who don't live there, and echoed vociferously by the young people who claim to have “escaped” them — an image that requires us to equate freeways with barbed-wire fences, and malls with guard

towers.

In the conventional wisdom, the greatest threat posed by suburbs is that they have the temerity to grow, or “sprawl,” in urban studies jargon, which sums up the paradox of the suburban problem: That people actually want to live in these terrible places, no matter how many novels, movies, magazine articles or learned studies con-

demn them.

It requires that we look at suburbs as places that never change, or that their essence is frozen in the mid-century form described by Yates and others — an eternal Levittown, where the saplings never turn into trees, and no one ever puts a skate ramp in the pool or builds a grow-op in the rec room.

In his zeal to reprise his suburb-bashing, Mendes was probably blind to how his tragedy would actually play. Most people will probably watch *Revolutionary Road* and envy Frank and April's cute home with its very collectible period furnishings and the woods across the road and wonder if they could move in tomorrow, hopeless emptiness be damned.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

In the conventional wisdom, the greatest threat posed by suburbs is that they have the temerity to grow, or 'sprawl.'

Those kettles are more steady than GICs, more giving than Canada Savings Bonds.

The kettle reassures in uncertain times

UrbanCompass



Things have been wonky lately. Gas prices are up, gas prices are down. Investments are only down, while the number of houses unsold on our real-estate market is up. Even our fabled mothership EnCana has a hiring freeze.

Yet, there are things that reassure. There's the nightly sighting of Darryl Janz and Barb Higgins, the longest running TV anchor duo in the land. There are time-honoured Christmas traditions. I'm partial to *Silent Night*, and nativity scenes with back lighting.

And there are those red swinging Salvation Army kettles, “personned” by one

of 2,500 volunteers. You just want to hug them, so mod in their red-vested staidness. Those kettles are more steady than GICs, more giving than Canada Savings Bonds.

It's hard to find a charitable symbol so historic. In December 1891, a Salvation Army captain in San Francisco wanted to provide a free Christmas dinner to the poor. He had no money. Then he recalled his days as a sailor in Liverpool, England, where charitable donations were thrown into a pot. In the same way, he got his money for that dinner, and now kettles can be found worldwide.

In Calgary, there are 70 kettles at malls citywide, and if all goes well at least \$1 million will be raised, matching last year's total. Volunteers come from the

city's service clubs including Rotary, Kinsmen, Lion's, and the Progress Club. Area malls then welcome the volunteers and provide a warm

space for the kettle to swing.

You've heard it before, but the kettle campaign is for a good cause.

The Salvation Army is the nation's largest provider of non-government social services in the country. It is inspired by faith, by those who think caring for fellow humans is divinely inspired. Quaint, really. But a lot sexier than weird mortgages, hedge funds, or any other financial instruments we never really understood.

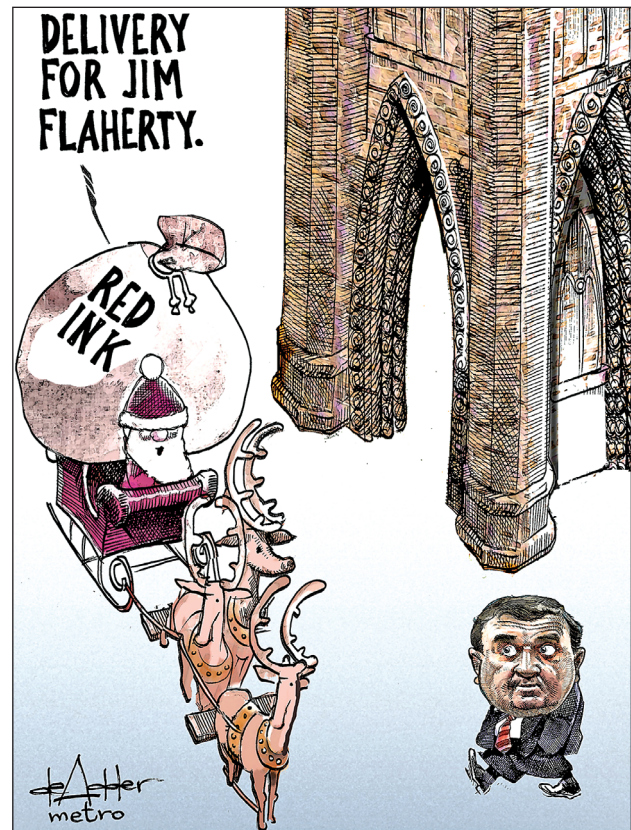
Here in Calgary, the Salvation Army provides temporary and emergency housing to 610 people on 9th Ave. SE. This week, it was

part of an overall city-led strategy to ensure everyone was safe at night. All agencies who serve the homeless (including the Mustard Seed, and City of Calgary) worked together, to “turn no one away.” As temperatures plunged, beds filled and an additional 70 mats were laid out at the Salvation Army.

All year, the Sally Ann works with thousands of families to help them tide over job losses, and keep them in their homes with emergency rents, and food. For those who don't make it, temporary housing is there.

Regardless of your theology, there's the solid symbol of that kettle. The campaign runs until Dec. 24. Your deposit is secure, this time in the right hands.

Janice Paskey teaches journalism at Mount Royal College, serves on her community association board and is proud mom to two boys.



Letters

Automakers aren't the only industry in need of aid

I am extremely saddened to see the amount of attention the automotive-industry bailout is getting in the media. It is understandable that most people want to keep the many jobs being held down by those in southern Ontario, yet I rarely see the devastating news of layoffs and mill closures in smaller communities like Kenora, Ont., Dryden, Ont., Thunder Bay, Ont., Terrace Bay, Ont., and Fort Frances, Ont., over the past few years.

For Dryden, a one-industry town, the continued cutting of staff and the permanent shutdown of its paper machine this year leaves many wondering about the stability of the town. Many teenagers who leave to attend college and university never come back as there are few jobs to be had in their field.

Yes, these towns are considerably smaller than the giant cities in southern Ontario, but deserve just as much attention by our governments and media than they have been receiving.

Perhaps if more was done to create and keep the existing jobs, many wouldn't

be forced to leave and go to other parts of the country to earn their living.

VICKI WALCHUK, TORONTO

Canadian Afghan troops deserve more credit

It would be nice if our Canadian troops in Afghanistan got a little more credit for the hard and dangerous work they are doing.

Since 9-11, it seems Canada is the only country that is taking the job seriously of repairing Afghanistan and rooting out the Taliban and al-Qaida. Yet despite our seven-year effort, nobody on the international stage seems to be giving Canadians any credit for our excellent job in anti-terrorism.

Even with the RCMP preventing the Toronto 18 from conducting its alleged terrorist plans, there seems to be no credit from other nations on how we prevented a terrorist attack from happening in the first place.

I honestly think nations like the United States and Great Britain could learn a thing or two from Canadians on how to handle terrorism.

GEOFFREY DONOVAN STINES, TORONTO

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Chrysler, which is halting factory operations for a month as sales and cash dwindle, will not abandon its involvement in NASCAR racing but will reduce spending by about one-third to put expenses in line with its revenue, the company said Thursday. **REUTERS**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Obama vows to bolster financial regulation

ECONOMY U.S. president-elect Barack Obama promised yesterday to strengthen financial regulatory agencies and crack down on runaway "greed and scheming" in an effort to restore stability to a reeling U.S. economic system.

Obama named veteran regulator Mary Schapiro as chairwoman of the Securities and Exchange Commission and Gary Gensler to head the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The president-elect said he would charge them with leading a broad overhaul of the financial regulatory system.

"These individuals will help put in place new, common-sense rules of the road that will protect investors, consumers and

our entire economy from fraud and manipulation by an irresponsible few," Obama told reporters. **REUTERS**

Schapiro's plan



REUTERS/JEFF HANES

• Mary Schapiro, who has spent her career regulating financial markets, said investor trust was the lifeblood of the financial markets. Restoring that confidence would be her "top priority," she said.

Boxing Day comes early

Retailers try to kickstart sales with blockbuster deals

As the economic news worsens, Canadian retailers are pushing hard to convince consumers they can get their best deals now instead of waiting until after Christmas.

Several national retailers, including Danier Ltd. and Sears Canada, are using "Boxing Day" in their advertising messages to draw attention to their pre-Christmas deals.

Every luxury chains, like Birks, have resorted to "Buy one, get one 50 per cent off," a strategy normally associated with more mid-market clothing retailers.

"I think it's the deepest discounts that we've seen ever at this time of year,"

"The thing that's really surprised us is just how fast (the economic downturn) has happened. I think the question everyone is waiting on is how bad it's going to get."

Derek Nighbor, Retail Council of Canada

said Wendy Evans, a principal with Evans & Company, a consulting firm. Retailers "are looking at any opportunities they can to lure consumers into the stores before Christmas."

As Canadians begin to feel the impact of the U.S. financial crisis, consumers have become increasingly cautious in their spending, Canada's biggest retailer organization noted.

"The thing that's really surprised us is just how fast (the economic downturn) has happened," said Derek Nighbor, vice-president of prescient national affairs for the Retail Council of Canada. "I think the question everyone is waiting on is how bad it's going to get."

General merchandise stores, food stores and electronics all reported

sharply higher sales, while clothing store sales were softer, Evans noted.

However, an internal survey by the Retail Council showed sales in November were mixed, while the first few days of December were noticeably slower.

A survey conducted for Scotiabank in mid-November found Canadians planned to spend just \$790 on average, or 13 per cent less than last year, on holiday gifts, entertainment and travel.

Amid the worsening economic news, retailers have resorted to increasingly aggressive tactics to stand out from the pack, consultants say.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Germany Sign of the times



REUTERS/KAI PRAFFENBACH

A share trader is pictured behind a mock one-dollar U.S. bill and a mock 500 Euro note symbolizing a consumer credit note at the German stock exchange in Frankfurt. Corporate sentiment deteriorated for the seventh month running in December, raising pressure on the European Central Bank to cut rates further to counter what could be Germany's deepest post-war recession.

If automakers fail, 'orderly' fall needed: White House

AUTOS The White House said yesterday it is considering the option of an "orderly" bankruptcy as it weighs aid for U.S. automakers and Chrysler prepared to shut down all of its factories for a month.

The move by the Bush administration injected a new note of uncertainty into the politically charged discussions of a bailout for the U.S. automakers that is reaching a conclusion after more than a month of wrangling.

U.S. President George W. Bush is weighing the option of a managed bankruptcy in the U.S. auto industry as it works out details of an aid package that is close to being finalized, the White House said.

"There is an orderly way to do bankruptcies that provides for more of a soft landing."

Dana Perino

There is an "orderly way to do bankruptcies that provides for more of a soft landing," White House spokeswoman Dana Perino said. "That would be one of the options. I'm not saying that is necessarily what would be announced."

In a prepackaged or managed bankruptcy, concessions and financing are arranged before a court filing to accelerate and simplify a restructuring.

The news came as Chrysler geared up to shut down all of its 30 factories for a month, starting today, as it struggles to survive a plunge in vehicle demand that has put a massive strain on its liquidity.

Chrysler, which is seen as the weakest of the three Detroit automakers, has said it needs federal aid to survive into 2009. GM has also requested billions of dollars in immediate help to forestall potential failure.

The White House, which has repeatedly said it wants to help only those automakers that have long-term viability, said the administration was taking into account Chrysler's decision on shutdowns. **REUTERS**

RIM offers cheer with strong sales

WIRELESS After issuing a profit warning earlier this month, BlackBerry-maker Research In Motion Ltd. gave investors some cheer by reporting a "best-ever start to the holiday buying season" on \$396 million US in income, up seven per cent, and forecasting an improved \$3.3 billion to \$3.5 billion in revenue.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Economic 'barrage' to hit auto-parts firms

INDUSTRY Deteriorating economic conditions will hammer profits in the auto-parts industry by 58 per cent, or almost \$1 billion, this year and in 2009, according to a gloomy Conference Board of Canada report.

In sharp contrast to a forecast last spring, the board said yesterday that profits for auto-parts companies will plunge 38 per

cent this year, to \$1.05 billion from \$1.69 billion, and fall to \$700 million, down another 32 per cent, in 2009 — the lowest forecast the board has made since the study began in 1999.

"Canada's motor-vehicle parts manufacturing industry is being forced to put on the brakes as a result of an unrelenting barrage of structural and macroeconomic develop-

ments that have materialized over the last two years," board economist Sabrina Browarski said in the report.

Output will also fall for a fourth consecutive year in 2009, the board said. Revenues will tumble 17 per cent or almost \$5 billion to \$22.8 billion this year and slip another 3.4 per cent to \$22.1 billion in 2009. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Business in brief

PIPELINE TransCanada Corp. is joining power generator TransAlta Corp. in a major Alberta carbon capture and storage proposal to provide expertise in pipelines to the project. Project Pioneer could cost more than \$400 million and would take carbon emitted from a coal-fired power plant in the Wabamun region near Edmonton and inject it underground, as well as pipe it to old oil fields.

OIL A combination of declining oil prices, lower crude demand and a 2.2 million barrels per day production cut will cost OPEC another \$151 billion US in lost oil export revenue next year, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said yesterday. As a result, the EIA revised down its monthly forecast for OPEC's oil export revenue during 2009 by 25 per cent to \$444 billion US, which would be the lowest level since 2004. **REUTERS**

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According to various media reports, Maple Leafs GM Brian Burke was upset he was not invited to Trevor Linden's jersey retirement ceremony Wednesday. Burke was Vancouver Canucks assistant GM when Linden was drafted in 1988, and was GM while Linden played there for several seasons. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports

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Whitt, Morneau in for WBC

Ernie Whitt, left, will manage Canada's team at next year's World Baseball Classic while Minnesota Twins first baseman Justin Morneau has been named the squad's first player. The March 5 to 23 World Baseball Classic will be played in several cities around the world, including Toronto. Canada opens play March 7 against the U.S. at Rogers Centre. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Second feels pretty good to Heil

Olympic champion Jennifer Heil returned with a bang, capturing a silver medal at the World Cup freestyle skiing circuit Thursday.

She placed second to U.S.'s Hannah Kearney in the woman's dual moguls. The native from Spruce Grove, Alta., had sat out all of last season to recover from a knee injury and improve her technique.

Heil finished fourth in qualifying and posted victories in her quarter-final and semifinal.

The four-time overall World Cup champion and gold medalist at the 2006 Turin Olympics says she lost against Kearney because she lost control.

Fellow Canadian Pierre-Alexandre Rousseau landed a gold medal, defeating teammate Alexandre Bilo-

deau, who Rousseau says beat him at the Canadian championships last season. Audrey Robichaud of Quebec City was ninth, Stephanie St-Pierre of Victoriaville, Que., 12th, Maxime Dufour-Lapointe of Montreal 13th, Kristi Richards of Summerland, B.C., 16th and Chloe Dufour-Lapointe of Montreal 21st.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Jennifer Heil returned from a season-long hiatus to capture the silver in her return to the World Cup freestyle circuit.

Sundin picks Vancouver

JEFF HODSON
for Metro Canada



Santa Claus, it turns out, is a big fan of the Vancouver Canucks.

And in that spirit of giving, yesterday he plopped a big Swedish present into a pair of hockey socks that had dangled hopefully from Vancouver's collective mantle since July.

Mats Sundin is the newest member of the Vancouver Canucks, General Manager Mike Gillis announced Thursday afternoon. The 37-year-old free agent centre was signed to a one-year, pro-rated \$10-million deal, according to media reports.

"I am truly excited to be joining the Canucks," said Sundin in a statement. "Once I made the decision to return to play a few weeks ago, the Vancouver opportunity was simply the best overall fit."

Sundin, who is at his home in Sweden for Christmas, will be in Vancouver on Dec. 27. There is no timeline for him to enter the lineup, Gillis said, and he will be treated like any other player returning from injury or absence.

A number of suitors, including the Montreal Canadiens and New York Rangers, were also seeking Sundin.

Gillis, who met with Sundin on Oct. 30, said he was encouraged by the level of interest the Swede showed in the Canucks.

"I had a real good feeling that his interest was there, and if he decided to play we had a real opportunity to get him," said Gillis.



Mats Sundin

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CASTLE MOUNTAIN: Mid mountain base: 55 cm; limited opening planned for weekend

PANORAMA: Summit depth 62 cm, with 20 runs and 7 of 9 lifts open

FERNIE: 2 cm new snow, 5 lifts, 24 runs operating

KICKING HORSE: 1 cm new, 4 lifts and 89 runs open

CANADA OLYMPIC PARK: Hill is open, snow info not available

NAKISKA: 7 cm new snow, 60 cm base, 4 of 6 lifts open, 9 of 28 runs open

REVELSTOKE: 10 cm new, 118 cm base at top, 3 of 4 lifts open, 23 runs open

MARMOT BASIN: Trace new snow, 75 cm base, 6 of 7 lifts open this weekend, 46 runs open

Wings deep-six Sharks

NHL ROUNDUP

Ty Conklin made 24 saves for his sixth NHL shutout and Pavel Datsyuk had two goals and two assists to lift the Detroit Red Wings to a 6-0 win over the San Jose Sharks last night.

San Jose has the NHL's best record (25-4-3), but the Sharks lost for the second straight night. They fell at Columbus 2-1 in overtime on Wednesday. The defending Stanley Cup champion Red Wings have the second-best record in the Western Conference (21-6-4). Detroit scored on successive shots in a span of 1:27 late in the first period to take a 2-0 lead after San Jose had carried most of the play to that point.

BRUINS 8, MAPLE LEAFS 5

David Krejci netted his first career hat trick and Phil Kessel continued his amazing points streak with two goals and an assist, as Boston beat Toronto, 8-5, securing its 12th straight home win. Marc Savard added a goal and three assists for the Bruins, who won for the



The Flyers' Glen Metropolit collides with Canadiens goalie Jaroslav Halak last night. Montreal won 5-2.

eight time in nine games to move their record to 22-5-4, tops in the Eastern Conference. Their current home win streak is the longest since a 16-game run during the 1975-76 season.

CANADIENS 5, FLYERS 2

Sergei Kostitsyn, Steve Begin and Guillaume La-

tendresse each posted a goal and an assist, as the Montreal Canadiens knocked off the Philadelphia Flyers, 5-2, at the Bell Centre.

Alex Kovalev and Matt D'Agostini also lit the lamp for the Canadiens, who snapped a three-game losing streak.

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Cincinnati police arrested Mississippi men's basketball coach Andy Kennedy early Thursday after a cab driver said the coach punched him while calling him "bin Laden" and other racial insults. Kennedy was charged with a first-degree misdemeanor count of assault. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports in brief

NHL St. Louis Blues captain Eric Brewer will be out indefinitely with a herniated disc in his back, the team announced Thursday. Brewer will undergo surgery today at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. The 29-year-old has recorded one goal and five assists in 28 games this season and has not played since Dec. 11

against the Kings. In 10 seasons with the Islanders, Oilers and Blues, Brewer has 179 points in 623 games.

NFL Minnesota Vikings quarterback Tarvaris Jackson will start Sunday against the Atlanta Falcons in place of Gus Frerotte.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Yanks show off new arms

The New York Yankees introduced a new pair of aces at the top of the rotation on Thursday in free agents CC Sabathia and A.J. Burnett who they hope will re-arm them for another run at a championship.

Their contracts, worth a combined \$243.5 million US, made the biggest splash at Major League Baseball's recent winter meetings and gave evidence that the new Steinbrenner regime was determined to launch the new Yankee Stadium with a winner. Sabathia, who signed the richest contract

ever for a pitcher at \$161 million for seven years, pondered the Yankees' mammoth offer for a month, leaving many to believe he would instead join a team on the West Coast where he grew up.

"The whole time I was trying to make a decision for me and my family," the 28-year-old told reporters, admitting "there was some attraction" to staying in California.

Burnett, who agreed to a five-year \$82.5-million contract, was 18-10 record last season for the Toronto Blue Jays and said he was confi-



A.J. Burnett, left, and CC Sabathia meet the New York media Thursday.

dent he had overcome his injury-plagued past. "As a young kid growing up in the game, I threw hard and real-

ly, that's all I did," the fireballing Burnett, 31, said.

"I aired it out between starts. I was proud of what I had and showed it off. I didn't take care of myself the way I do now." Cashman said he listened to Johnny Damon, Alex Rodriguez and Derek Jeter, who all lobbied him to obtain Burnett. "His stuff is electric," the general manager said. Yankee manager Joe Girardi grinned broadly when asked to assess his top starters, including Chien-Ming Wang, who returns after missing most of last season because of injury.

REUTERS

NFL A Texas farewell



Barring playoff games, the Dallas Cowboys will play their final game at 37-year-old Texas Stadium on Saturday night against the Baltimore Ravens. The unique hole in the roof once led former Cowboys linebacker D.D. Lewis to quip, "Texas Stadium has a hole in the roof so God can watch his favourite team."

Jawai cleared to practise for Raptors

There were nights when sleep wouldn't come to Nathan Jawai, nights when he would toss and turn and worry about his future and his health.

That's what happens when a seemingly healthy 22-year-old is told there are issues with his heart, issues big enough that he couldn't do the one thing he loves most, issues serious enough that he had to halt all physical activity.

But as he stood next to the doorway of the Air Canada Centre practice gym yesterday in Toronto, perspiration dripping off him after a nice time on the treadmill and even greater time on the basketball court, those sleepless nights were the furthest thing from his mind.

"No stress, no sleepless nights any more," the Raptors rookie said.

Jawai, a 6-10, 280-pound

Australian taken 41st overall in last June's NBA draft, has been idle for almost three months now. Doctors found something disturbing with his heart during pre-season testing and shut him down. He's had test after test since that day, and also a period of extended inactivity that finally ended Tuesday when cardiologists cleared him to play. Those weeks and weeks of waiting were the

most difficult of his young life, a situation exacerbated by the fact he was half a world away from his family.

"It was real hard," he said. "The support's back home. But I got a lot of support, a lot of phone calls from my mom and dad, telling me to put my head up, that was really helpful during the three months I was out."

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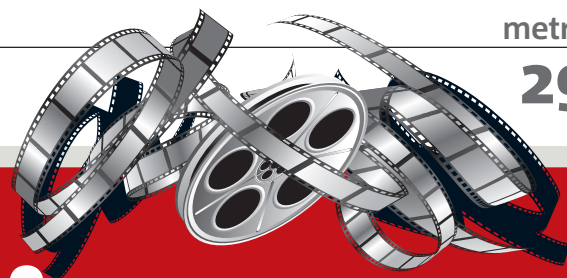
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Movies & Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

A new man

Pg 30



Will Smith's character is armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture — these are the hallmarks of the traumatized man he plays in the new drama *Seven Pounds*. Smith's committed to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters.

movie

Pg 31



Yes Man shows Carrey back at humble, funny roots.

music

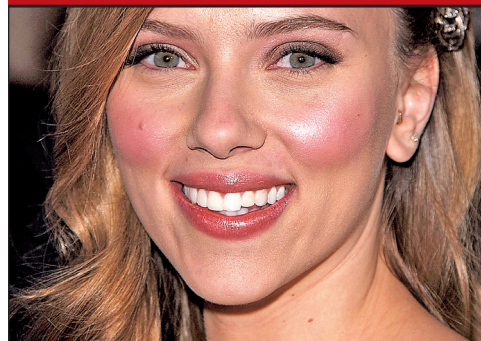
Pg 36



Alan Cross delivers his gift: Part 2 of the holiday playlist.

7th heaven

Pg 35



Scarlett Johansson makes our hot list for this week.

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Movies

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Seven Pounds weighs on viewers

Seven Pounds

Director: Gabriele Muccino
Stars: Will Smith, Rosario Dawson
Classification: 14A
Rating: ●●●

ROBERT ABELE
for Metro Canada



It's an unusual sight, Will Smith looking uncomfortable in his own skin, armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture.

These are the hallmarks of the traumatized character he plays in the new drama Seven Pounds — and as committed as the box office star is to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters, the movie around him is something of an overly manipulative, good-for-you slog.

Smith stars as Ben Thomas, a man in full-on suffering from the emotional after-effects of a traumatic incident, the details of which the movie



Will Smith stars in the drama Seven Pounds.

keeps hidden till the end, but aren't hard to ascertain.

Spurred to seek redemption, he takes it upon himself to intrude upon and help the lives of seven carefully chosen people, including a hospitalized boy, a blind call centre worker (Woody Harrelson), and a beautiful cardiac patient (Rosario Dawson).

Dawson's character, an artisan typesetter with a bum heart and financial problems, naturally becomes the unsuspecting catalyst to Ben's accepting love in his austere determined life.

Rather than lay all their cards on the table as to what Ben is up to, screenwriter Grant Nieporte and director Gabriele Muccino

traffic in ersatz suspense, keeping the nature of Ben's sacrificial charity mission secret so that the love story carries maximum tearjerk power when it reaches its twist ending.

It's an audience game that diverts our energies away from the human emotions, though.

And unfortunately, the big reveal is no surprise, and even comes off as faintly ludicrous and bizarre, something for an episode of Ripley's Believe It or Not rather than a touching drama of two souls — each with a different version of a broken heart — finding each other.

It's all especially dispiriting considering how well Smith and director Muccino worked on their previous collaboration, the emotionally tense and genuinely uplifting The Pursuit of Happyness. Smith and Dawson are fine actors, but they're trapped in a movie in which they're more pawns than people.

Doubt leads SAG nominations

AWARDS Film drama Doubt led all nominees for Screen Actors Guild awards yesterday with five nominations overall, including for best ensemble cast, even as talk of a possible strike cast a cloud over the awards.

Joining Doubt, about a Catholic priest and nun engaged in a battle of wits over charges of sexual abuse, in the race for best ensemble cast were Milk, about slain gay rights leader Harvey Milk, and The Curious Case of Ben-

jamin Button, which tells of a man who ages backward. Those movies each earned three SAG award nods.

Slumdog Millionaire, a tale of romance and money set in India, and Frost/Nixon, which recounts the interviews of disgraced former U.S. president Richard Nixon by British TV host David Frost, also saw their actors land in the race for best ensemble cast and pulled down two nominations apiece.

REUTERS

SAG nominees

- Actor: Richard Jenkins, The Visitor; Frank Langella, Frost/Nixon; Sean Penn, Milk; Brad Pitt, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button; Mickey Rourke, The Wrestler.
- Actress: Anne Hathaway, Rachel Getting Married; Angelina Jolie, Changeling; Melissa Leo, Frozen River; Meryl Streep, Doubt; Kate Winslet, Revolutionary Road.
- Supporting actor: Josh Brodin, Milk; Robert Downey Jr., Tropic Thunder; Philip Seymour Hoffman, Doubt; Heath

- Ledger, The Dark Knight; Dev Patel, Slumdog Millionaire.
- Supporting actress: Amy Adams, Doubt; Penelope Cruz, Vicky Cristina Barcelona; Viola Davis, Doubt; Taraji P. Henson, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button; Kate Winslet, The Reader.
- Cast: Doubt, Frost/Nixon, Milk, Slumdog Millionaire, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button.
- Stunt ensemble: The Dark Knight, Hellboy II: The Golden Army, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, Iron Man, Wanted.

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PG-13

Ford to appear in comedy

Harrison Ford is taking a break from fighting bad guys and saving the world to try his hand in a comedic role. The 66-year-old actor has signed on to the film *Morning Glory*, the Hollywood Reporter says. **MSN.COM**

Reel Time

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Carrey agreeable in comedy, Yes Man**Yes Man****Director:** Peyton Reed**Stars:** Jim Carrey, Zoëy Deschanel**Classification:** PG**Rating:** ●●●●

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



Jim Carrey is a man who decides to only say "yes" in *Yes Man*.

REVIEW Jim Carrey has a fatal flaw — his fans aren't sure what to expect from him anymore. After years of exploring slapstick in laughers like *Ace Ventura*, Carrey has meandered into melodramatic muck like *The Majestic* and *The Number 23* in an effort to be taken seriously.

With *Yes Man*, it seems Carrey may be heeding his film's own counsel and just enjoying the ride come what may.

It's definitely an approach that works for him — if not entirely for the movie.

Based on a true memoir, Carrey plays a pessimistic bank loan officer who avoids friends to spend evenings alone and basi-

cally wallow in his misery. After being convinced by a self-help guru to "make a covenant" and say yes to everything, he suddenly finds a world of opportunity — for better or worse.

For Carrey the character, that means taking up an online mail-order bride, attending a Harry Potter-themed party, plowing back Red Bulls all night and falling for a free-spirited musician (Zoëy Deschanel).

For Carrey the actor, it means getting to re-ex-

plore both his famed physical stuntwork — like slipping on a drink (which actually earned him three broken ribs) and the more subtle side that charmed audiences in films like *The Truman Show*.

Sometimes it works, sometimes not, but the truth is, this comedy has a lot of heart and in spite of its formulaic conclusion,

The film is undeniably the most honest effort we've seen from Carrey in a while. Perhaps this *Yes Man* has a few tricks up his sleeve yet.

Classic story gets new tail**The Tale of Despereaux****Director:** Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen**Stars:** Matthew Broderick, Emma Watson**Classification:** G**Rating:** ●●●●

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada



The Tale Of Despereaux is a classically told fairy tale that relishes the conventions and limitations of its genre.

The story feels almost old fashioned in the earnestness of its style and message, but in a weird way that's what elevates it over the ever-growing pile of CGI children's films clogging theatres.

This is hardly the most original movie of its kind, but it is oddly refreshing to see a movie like this told without a shred of irony.

Matthew Broderick lends his instantly recognizable

voice to the titular character of Despereaux, a mouse with massive ears and an inflated sense of courage who dreams of adventure and heroism.

While the rest of the mice who live hidden in a medieval castle lead an insular life in fear of humans, Despereaux ventures out of his community to save a dying kingdom.

Like I said, pretty standard stuff, but the screenplay by Gary Ross is so tightly constructed and filled with gentle humor that the intended audience won't notice.

It's undoubtedly Ross'



con-tribution that made this potentially clichéd story work.

Ross has made a career out of writing gentle fantasies like *Big Fish*, *Seabiscuit*, and *Pleasantville* that make traditional storytelling, plots, and messages feel alive and new.

His script is brought to life admirably by the directing team of Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen, who use their many years of experience in animation to create a technical marvel that doesn't quite match the triumphs of Pixar, but comes damn close.

As is expected, the voice cast is filled with recognizable actors, but rather than simply casting stars the film uses talented actors like Dustin Hoffman, Emma Watson, and William H. Macy to play characters who are actually suited to their talents.

Make no mistake, this is a very simple movie offering simple pleasures. But in a time when most children's entertainment is struggling to seem cynical, edgy, and hip, *The Tale Of Despereaux* offers an unexpected breath of fresh air.

MERRY MISCHIEF FOR LESS!

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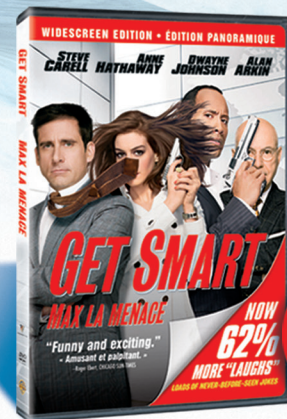
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Writer pleased Valkyrie finally found its wings

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada



FEATURE Christopher McQuarrie is as shocked as anyone that Valkyrie found its wings. In fact, the award-winning filmmaker — mostly regarded for writing The Usual Suspects — never even expected his latest movie to get off the ground.

"Scripts like this, I write them and put them in a drawer," admitted McQuarrie — who also co-produced Valkyrie — during a recent phone interview.

The true story of an inside assassination plot against Adolf Hitler in 1944, Valkyrie is definitely the sort of film Hollywood generally shuns like the plague. So what inspired the scribe to script a story he assumed wasn't sellable?

"The thing that really amazed me was that the assassination itself was not the end of the story," said McQuarrie. "Once you've killed Hitler, you've only just started and now what you have to do is take over his government.



Tom Cruise stars in Valkyrie.

"The challenge of history is not how it ends, it's how to give that ending meaning ... what these men did and the sacrifices they made ultimately brings this movie to what I feel is a really satisfying conclusion."

Lucky for McQuarrie, his Usual Suspects director Bryan Singer (who also helmed X-Men and Superman Returns) shared that sentiment. Throw in Tom Cruise — who plays Stauffenberg, the fascinating mind behind the assassination plot — and there was no looking back for McQuarrie and Valkyrie.

Valkyrie opens Christmas Day across Canada.

Where there's a Will people

InFocus

Richard Crouse

mrchaos33@hotmail.com

Will Smith is the world's biggest movie star: Nobody can touch him. Cruise jumped the couch, Clooney's movies don't make any money and Hanks appears to be in semi-retirement. Only Johnny Depp comes close and he is a distant second.

Last year Big Willie took home \$80 million and became the first actor to have eight consecutive movies break the \$100 million mark at the box office, but despite all that success a couple of key qualifiers have eluded his grasp.

His home is probably beautiful, but no movie star abode is complete without an Oscar or Golden Globe on the mantle. Cruise has three Globes, Clooney an Oscar and Tom



Will Smith has won acclaim, but he still hasn't earned an Oscar.

Hanks could start a petting zoo with all his Academy Awards.

Smith has none but it's not for lack of trying.

He's best known for playing cops and agents but in his first big screen role, Six Degrees of Separation, he played a gay con man who claims to be the son of Sidney Poitier. The movie earned an Oscar nod for co-star Stockard Channing but nothing for Will's risky performance.

He says that movie taught him to be totally committed to his roles, adding that he now regrets taking Denzel Washington's advice not to kiss a man on-screen.

"It was very immature on my part," he says. "I was thinking, 'What are my friends in Philly going to think about this?' This was a valuable lesson for me. Either you do it or you don't."

In subsequent films, the ones that made him a star, he developed the tools that came to define his on-screen persona; the cocky tilt of the head and hipster charm. Those tricks won over audiences but don't win awards.

Then along came a pair of films that put him on the serious-actor grid, The Legend of Bagger Vance and Ali. Bagger Vance earned poor reviews and

even worse box office, but the Michael Mann film about the legendary fighter gave Smith his first Oscar bait lead role.

For the next few years he seemed content to rule the box office, but two collaborations with Italian director Gabriele Muccino — The Pursuit of Happyness and Seven Pounds, in theatres today — have brought him closer to the award's circle.

"Gabriele Muccino," Smith says, "is able to help me create characters that are much different from what I would do on my own."

Pundits called their first collaboration Pursuit of an Oscar Nomination and you can almost sense him groping for the award in Seven Pounds, but I fear he doesn't stand a chance this year against Sean Penn, Mickey Rourke and Frank Langella.

He may just have to settle for world domination and leave the awards for the poor folks.

Richard Crouse is the author of Son of the 100 Best Movies You've Never Seen and film critic for CTV's Canada AM.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

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Screen Times

This week's new releases are highlighted in red.

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 19 TO THURS., DEC. 25. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

For reviews of *Bedtime Stories*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *The Spirit* and *Valkyrie* pick up the Wed., Dec. 24 issue of Metro.

CANYON MEADOWS

Bay 110 13226 Macleod Trail, 403-670-5444

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (G) Fri-Tue 1:05-3:30-7:10 Wed 1:05-3:30
Body of Lies (14A) Fri-Tue 12:55-4:05-6:50-9:30 Wed 12:55-4:05
Changeling (14A) Fri-Tue 1-4:05-8 Wed 1-4:05
City of Ember (PG) Fri-Tue 3:40-6:50 Wed 3:40
The Duchess (14A) Fri-Tue 9:20
Eagle Eye (14A) Fri-Tue 1:20-4:20-6:50-9:35 Wed 1:20-4:20
Ghost Town (PG) Fri-Tue 3:40-7:25-9:50 Wed 3:40
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Fri-Tue 1:20-4:10-7:05 Wed 1:20-4:10
Mamma Mia! (PG) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:10-7:20-9:50 Wed 1:30-4:10
Max Payne (14A) Fri-Tue 1:10-3:55-7:05-9:30 Wed 1:10-3:55
Passchendaele (14A) Fri-Wed 12:50
Quarantine (18A) Fri-Tue 9:35
RocknRolla (14A) Fri-Tue 1-9:40 Wed 1
The Secret Life of Bees (PG) Fri-Tue 1:10-4:10-7:15-9:40 Wed 1:10-4:10

CROWFOOT CROSSING

91 Crowfoot Terrace, 403-547-3316

Australia (PG) Fri-Tue 12-3:40-7:40 Wed 2-6:30
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 4:15-6:45-9:20
Bolt (G) Fri-Tue 12:10-2:45-5:7-25-9:55 Wed 12:10-2:45-5:7-25 Thu 2:45-5
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 3:40-7:40
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:50-1:10-3:50-4:10-7-7:15-9:45-10:15 No Passes Wed 12:50-1:10-3:50-4:10-7-7:15 No Passes Thu 3:50-7:15-10:05
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-3-6:30-9:30 Wed 12:30-3-6:30 Thu 3-6:30-9:30
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Tue 1:40-4:15-6:40-9:20 Wed 1:40-4:15-6:40
Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 3:20-6:40-9:40
Metropolitan Opera: Thaïs (STC) Sat 10
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:20 Wed 1:30-4:30-7:30 Thu 4:30-7:30-10:20
Role Models (14A) Fri 1:50-4:40-7:20-10 Sat 4:40-7:20-10 Sun-Tue 1:50-4:40-7:20-10 Wed 1:50-4:40-7:20
Seven Pounds (14A) No Passes Fri-Tue 1-4:7-10-10:10 No Passes Wed 1-4:7-10 No Passes Thu 4:7-10-10:10
The Spirit (14A) Thu 4:40-7:25-9:55
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:20-2:50-5:10-7:35-9:50 No Passes Wed 12:20-2:50-5:10-7:35 No Passes Thu 2:50-5:10-7:35-9:50
Twilight (PG) Fri-Tue 12:40-3:30-6:45-9:40 Wed 12:40-3:30-6:45 Thu 7:20-10:15

Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4:10-7-9:45
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:20-4:20-6:50-10:05 No Passes Wed 1:20-4:20-6:50 No Passes Thu 4:20-6:50-10

EAU CLAIRE MARKET

200 Barlay Parade, 403-263-3166

Australia (PG) Fri 7:30 Sat-Tue 12-3:45-7:30 Wed 2-6:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 4-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes Fri 7-10 No Passes Sat-Tue 12:15-3-7:10 No Passes Wed 12-3-7
Doubt (STC) Thu 3:20-7:10-10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 7:10-9:45 Sat-Tue 12:35-3:35-7:10-9:45 Wed 12:35-3:35-7:10
Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 3:35-6:50-9:50
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 6:50-9:50 Sat-Tue 12:30-3:30-6:50-9:50 Wed 12:30-3:30-6:50 Thu 3:30-7-9:45
The Reader (18A) Thu 3-6:40-9:40
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri 6:30-9:30 Sat-Tue 12:10-3:10-6:30-9:30 Wed 12:10-3:10-6:30 Thu 3:10-6:30-9:30
Twilight (PG) Fri 6:40-9:40 Sat-Tue 12:20-3:20-6:40

EMPIRE STUDIO 16 COUNTRY HILLS

388 Country Hills Blvd., 403-686-8491

Australia (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:30-4:7:30 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:30-4-6:15
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4-7:10-9:35
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:35-2:55-7-9:20 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:35-2:55 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:50-7:05-9:20
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4:15-5-8-9
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:30-1-3-3:30-7:7:30-9:30-10 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Tue 12:30-1-3-3:30-7:7:30-9:30-10 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:30-1-3-3:30-6:50 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:15-6:55-9:40
Doubt (STC) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:20-6:30-9:10
Four Christmases (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:45-1:15-3:10-3:40-6:50-7:20-9:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:45-1:15-3:10-3:40-6:50 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4:05-7:35-9:45
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12-2:30-6:30-9 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12-2:30-6:30 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3
Marley & Me (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 3:10-6:40-9:25
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 9:40 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 7:10
Punisher: War Zone (18A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 10:10 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 6:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 12:15-12:45-

2:50-3:20-6:45-7:15-9:20 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:15-12:45-2:50-3:20-6:45 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:35-7:40-10:15
Role Models (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:45-4:10-7:40 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 1:45-4:10
Seven Pounds (14A) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:05-4:05-7:05-9:55 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 1:05-4:05-7:05 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4:05-7:15-10:05
The Spirit (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4:10-7:25-9:50
The Tale of Despereaux (G) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sat 12:40-3:05-6:50-9:10 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Sun-Tue 12:40-3:05-6:50-9:10 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 12:40-3:05-6:50 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:05-6:50-9:15
Transporter 3 (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:50-4:25-7:25-10:05 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 1:50-4:25-7
Twilight (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1:10-4-7:10-9:55 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 1:10-4-7:05 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 6:45-9:30
Valkyrie (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:30-7:20-10:15
Yes Man (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Tue 12:25-12:55-3:05-3:35-7:05-7:40-9:35-10:05 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Wed 12:25-12:55-3:05-3:35-6:55 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3:45-4:15-7-7:30-9:30-10

EMPIRE STUDIO 10 MACLEOD TRAIL

100-16061 Macleod Trail, 403-974-0470

Australia (PG) Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri-Tue 9:10 Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Wed
Bedtime Stories (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 4:15-7-9:20
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, Digital Presentation Fri-Tue 2-4:30-7:05-9:30 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital, Digital Presentation Wed 2-4:30-7:05
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 4-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri-Tue 1:10-1:40-3:40-4:10-6:40-7:10-9:20-9:50 Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Wed 1:10-1:40-3:40-4:10-6:40-7:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 3:40-6:45-9:10
Four Christmases (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 1:50-4-7:30-9:45 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 1:50-4-7:30 Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Thu 7:15
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri-Wed 12:50-3:10-6:30
Marley & Me (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 3:30-6:50-9:30
Quantum of Solace (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 1:20-4:20-7:20-9:55 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 1:20-4:20-7:20 Stadium Seating,

DTS Digital Thu 4:45-9:45
Seven Pounds (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 12:30-3:20-7-10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 12:30-3:20-7 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Digital Thu 3:45-6:40-9:40
The Spirit (14A) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 4:20-7:30-10:10
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 1:30-4:15-6:45-9 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 1:30-4:15-6:45 Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Thu 3:50-6:30-9
Twilight (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 12:40-3:30-6:50-9:40 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 12:40-3:30-6:50
Valkyrie (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 3:15-7:10-10
Yes Man (PG) Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Fri-Tue 1-3:50-7:15-10:10 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Wed 1-3:50-7:15 Stadium Seating, SR Dolby Digital Thu 4:30-7:20-9:50

GLOBE CINEMA

617-8 Avenue, 403-262-3308

Morning Light (PG) Fri 7:15-9:30 Sat-Tue 1:15-3:30-7:15-9:30 Wed 1:15-3:30
Seven Pounds (14A) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Tue 1-3:20-7:20 Wed 1-3:20 Thu 7-9:20
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 7:15-9:30

MOVIEDOME

1039 999 36 St., 403-248-2000

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (G) Fri-Tue 12:55-3:55-6:40 Wed 12:55-3:55
City of Ember (PG) Fri-Tue 1:05-4-7-10 Wed 1:05-4
Eagle Eye (14A) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:40 Wed 12:45-3:45
The Express (PG) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:35-6:45-9:35 Wed 12:45-3:35
Heaven on Earth (STC) Fri-Tue 12:50-3:35-9:55 Wed 12:50-3:35
How to Lose Friends & Alienate People Fri-Tue 1-3:40-6:55-9:50 Wed 1-3:40
Igor (PG) Fri-Wed 1:10-4:05
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (PG) Fri-Tue 2-6:30-8:30 Wed 2-6:30
Sex Drive (18A) Fri-Tue 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:45 Wed 12:50-3:50

SCOTIABANK CHINOOK

6455 Macleod Trail, 403-212-8994

Australia (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-4:15-8 Wed 2-6:30
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 11:50-2:25-5-7:35-10:05
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 1:10-3:45 Thu 11:45-2:15-4:50-7:20-9:50 Fri-Tue 11:45-2:15-4:50-7:20-9:50 Wed 11:45-2:15-4:50-7:20
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12-2-4-6:30-8-10:05
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:50-3:50-7:10-10:35 No Passes Wed 12:50-3:50-7:10 No Passes Thu 12:50-3:50-7:10-10:35
The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12-2:30-5:05-7:35-10:15 No Passes Wed 12-2:30-5:05-7:35 No Passes Thu 12-2:30-5:05-7:35-10:15
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 12:55-3:55-7:15-9:40 Wed 12:55-3:55-7:15-9:40
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Tue 12-2:20-4:40-7-9:20 Wed 12-2:20-4:40-7-

Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 12:35-3:45-6:55-9:55
Metropolitan Opera: Thaïs (STC) Sat 10
Milk (14A) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:50-7:05-10:10 Wed 12:45-3:50-7:05 Thu 12:45-3:50-7:05-10:10
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:25 Sat 4:20-7:20-10:25 Sun-Tue 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:25 Wed 1:10-4:20-7:20
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 1-4-7-10 Wed 1-4-7 Thu 1-4-7-10
Role Models (14A) Fri-Tue 12:35-4:10-6:55-10:05 Wed 12:35-4:10-6:55
Seven Pounds (14A) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:15-4:25-7:30-10:30 No Passes Wed 1:15-4:25-7:30 No Passes Thu 1:15-4:25-7:30-10:30
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:20-4:30-7:25-10:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 11:50-2:10-4:45-7:15-9:40 No Passes Wed 11:50-2:10-4:45-7:15 No Passes Thu 11:50-2:10-4:45-7:15-9:40
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Tue 12:40-4:05-7:25-10:05 Wed 12:40-4:05-7:25-9:55 Wed 12:25-3:35-6:45 Thu 12:25-3:35-6:45-9:55
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 1:10-4:20-7:25-10:25
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:15-3:40-6:50-9:45 No Passes Wed 12:15-3:40-6:50 No Passes Thu 12:15-3:40-6:50-9:45 No Passes Fri-Tue 1:15-4:15-7:35-10:15 No Passes Wed 1:15-4:15-7:35 No Passes Thu 1:15-4:15-7:35-10:15
Zack and Miri Make a Porno (18A) Fri-Tue 7:40-10:25 Wed 7:40

PLAZA THEATRE

1133 Kensington Rd., 403-283-3636

It's a Wonderful Life (STC) Sun 10
JCVD (14A) Fri 12:40-4:50-9 Sat-Sun 4:50-9 Mon-Tue 12:40-4:50-9 Wed 12:40
Jesus Christ Vampire Hunter (STC) Wed 9
Let the Right One In (STC) Fri-Tue 2:25-6:50-10:40 Wed 2:25-6:50
The Secret of the Nutcracker (STC) Wed 5
A Sex Pistols Xmas (STC) Wed 9
Tell No One (14A) Sat-Sun 12:15

SUNRIDGE SPECTRUM

2555 32nd Street, 403-717-1200

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 12-2:30-5-7:30-10:10
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 1-3:45 Thu 12:25-3:05-6:45-9:20 Fri-Tue 12:25-3:10-6:45-9:20 Wed 12:25-3:10-6:45
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Fri-Tue 12-3:15-6:30-9:45 Wed 12-3:15-6:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:10-3:55-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:10-12:50-2:50-3:30-7-7:30-9:40-10:15 No Passes Wed 12:10-12:50-2:50-3:30-7-7:30 No Passes Thu 12:50-3:30-7-9:45
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-3:05-7:35-10 Wed 12:30-3:05-7:35 Thu 12:30-3-7:15-9:40
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Tue 12:35-3-6:35-9 Wed 12:35-3-6:35
Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 12:35-3:25-6:50-9:50
Metropolitan Opera: Thaïs (STC) Sat 10
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 12:40-3:25-7:05-9:50 Wed 12:40-3:25-7:05 Thu

12:40-3:20-6:40-9:25
Role Models (14A) Fri-Tue 6:50-9:30 Wed 6:50
Seven Pounds (14A) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:20-3:20-7:15-10:20 No Passes Wed 12:20-3:20-7:15 No Passes Thu 12:20-3:35-7:05-10:05
The Spirit (14A) Thu 12:55-3:40-6:55-9:35
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri 12:30-2:35-5-7:25-9:55 No Passes Sat-Tue 12:05-2:35-5-7:25-9:55 No Passes Wed 12:05-2:35-5-7:25 No Passes Thu 12:05-2:35-5-7:25-9:55
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri 12:55-3:50-6:55-9:35 Sat 3:50-6:55-9:35 Sun-Tue 12:55-3:50-6:55-9:35 Wed 12:55-3:50-6:55
Twilight (PG) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:40-7:10-10:05 Wed 12:45-3:40-7:10 Thu 12:45-4-7:10-10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 1-3:45-6:35-9:30
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:15-1:05-2:55-3:55-6:40-7:20-9:25-10:10 No Passes Wed 12:15-1:05-2:55-3:55-6:40-7:20 No Passes Thu 12:15-1:05-2:55-3:55-6:30-7:20-9:15-10:15

THE UPTOWN STAGE & SCREEN

612 8th Ave., 403-265-0120

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (PG) Fri 4:50 Sat-Sun 12:20-4:50 Mon-Tue 4:50
A Christmas Tale (14A) Fri 5:15-8:15 Sat-Sun 12:10-5:15-8:15 Mon-Tue 5:15-8:15
Happy-Go-Lucky (14A) Sat-Sun 3
Rachel Getting Married (STC) Fri-Tue 9
Vicky Cristina Barcelona (14A) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 2:20-7 Mon-Tue 7

WESTHILLS 10

165 Stewart Green, 403-246-5291

Australia (PG) Fri-Tue 12:20-3:50-7:50 Wed 2-6:30
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 3:40-6:50-9:25
Bolt (G) Fri-Tue 1:25-4:35-7:10-9:45 Wed 1:25-4:35-7:10
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 3:50-7:50
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:35-3:20-7:40-10:15 No Passes Wed 12:35-3:20-7:40 No Passes Thu 3:20-7:40-10:15
Doubt (STC) Thu 4:35-7:10-9:45
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 1:15-4:25-7:15-9:35 Wed 1:15-4:25-7:15 Thu 4:25-7:15-9:35
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Tue 1:05-4:05-7:05-9:20 Wed 1:05-4:05-7:05
Marley & Me (PG) No Passes Thu 4:05-7:05-9:50
Metropolitan Opera: Thaïs (STC) Sat 10
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 1:10-4:10-6:50-9:50 Wed 1:10-4:10-6:50
Seven Pounds (14A) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:25-3:30-7-10 No Passes Wed 12:25-3:30-7 No Passes Thu 3:30-7-10
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:40-3:10-7:25-9:55 No Passes Wed 12:40-3:10-7:25 No Passes Thu 3:10-7:25-9:55
Twilight (PG) Fri 12:50-3:40-6:40-9:30 Sat 3:40-6:40-9:30 Sun-Tue 12:50-3:40-6:40-9:30 Wed 12:50-3:40-6:40
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4:10-7:20-10:20
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:35-4:20-7:30-10:10 No Passes Wed 1:35-4:20-7:30 No Passes Thu 4:20-7:30-10:10



SMALL MOUSE. BIG DREAMS.

The Tale of Despereaux

UNIVERSAL PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH RELATIVITY MEDIA A LARGER THAN LIFE PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH FRAMESTORE ANIMATION "THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX" MATTHEW BRODERICK ROBBIE COLTRANE DUSTIN HOFFMAN RICHARD JENKINS KEVIN KLINE FRANK LANGELLA WILLIAM H. MACY TRACEY ULLMAN EMMA WATSON AND SIGOURNEY WEAVER MUSIC BY WILLIAM ROSS

BASED ON THE BOOK BY KATE DICAMILLO SCREEN STORY BY WILL McROBB & CHRIS VISCARDI SCREENPLAY BY GARY ROSS PRODUCED BY GARY ROSS ALLISON THOMAS DIRECTED BY SAM FELL ROB STEVENHAGEN

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LIVE THE ADVENTURE WITH THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX GAME ON THE NINTENDO DS™ SYSTEM

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Check Theatre Directory or www.universalpictures.ca for Locations and Showtimes

Paris presents herself
Paris Hilton's customized Pink Bentley has arrived. The hotel heiress recently bought the Christmas present to herself worth an estimated \$200,000 US. [FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK](#)

Television

Metalocalypse rocks

IntelleVision



BRUTAL: I can no longer give a convincing impression of someone whose world has been transformed by Jay Leno on primetime, and there's only so much I can say about Canadian Idol's yearlong "rest" without bursting into this disturbing giggle, so I thought I'd take a moment to talk about the second season of my favourite show, now on DVD just in time for Christmas.

You don't have to have grown up in a working class suburb in the '70s to love heavy metal, but it certainly helps, and as far as I can tell, metal fans generally love Metalocalypse, even though it viciously satirizes everything they hold dear. If you

haven't managed to catch its brief appearances on Teletoon's adult-only De-tour programming block, the premise is simple enough — Dethklok is the biggest band in the world, growing from the 13th to the seventh-largest economy in the world over the course of the show's two seasons. Try to imagine, say, that Slayer or Cannibal Corpse could cause international riots, or prompt debates at the UN.

Not that the world needed such a thing, but Metalocalypse is probably the most perfect take on metal's essence — morbid and epic megalomaniac teenage-boy fantasies alongside tawdry, lower-middle-class anxieties, executed with plenty of metal's graphic flourishes: Skulls and swords and bat's wings, and skulls with bat's wings, and swords with skulls, and bat's wings on swords. You get the picture.

The show is at its best when little or nothing is

going on but the sorts of digressive, numbskull conversations most men have had a few hundreds of in their lives, enlivened by a few moments of incredibly graphic violence. Basically, it's like spending a night in front of an Xbox with a bunch of boys — teenage or older — ungoverned by female influences, if only for a few precious hours.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

Mix of Six

WEEKEND EVENTS AROUND THE CITY

For more events, visit: [metronews.ca/entertainment](#)

Writers Go Underground

When: Friday night
Where: Broken City, 613 -11th Ave SW
Writers and musicians come together.

Manly Voices

When: Saturday, 8 p.m.
Where: Rosza Centre, University of Calgary
The gay-positive Calgary Men's Chorus knows how to wow audiences.

Chanukah for Kids

When: Sunday, 2 – 4 p.m.
Where: Beth Tzedec Synagogue, 1325 Glenmore Trail SW
Children's entertainer Paulo headlines.

Baby (Dance) Steps

When: Friday, 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Where: Trico Centre, 11150 Bonaventure Dr SE
New moms and babies learn basic Latin dance.

Don't re-gift

When: Saturday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Where: Queensland Community Hall, 649 Queensland Dr SE
The Men & Last-Minute Shoppers Fair.

Nativity

When: Sunday – Dec. 24
Where: Just outside Heritage Park, 7-9 p.m.
Live-action Nativity scene. Go to [calgarynativity.org](#) for more information.

Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now

1 Cruising around

Actor Tom Cruise is back in the spotlight again, this time plugging his Second World War thriller Valkyrie, which hits theatres Christmas Day.

2 Oh, baby

Bronx Mowgli, the name of singer Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz's son, has been crowned the worst celebrity baby name of 2008. About 5,000 visitors to BabyNames.com voted the moniker the most disliked male baby name of 2008. Jagger Joseph Blue — the daughter of actress Soleil Moon Frye and Jason Goldberg — was deemed the worst girl's name.

3 Back at the top

Harry Potter series author J.K. Rowling is back on top with The Tales of Beedle the Bard, currently the No. 1 bestseller on Amazon.ca.

4 Awards season

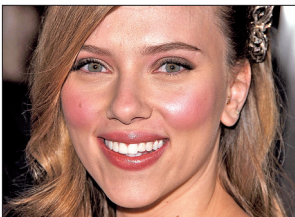
Movie awards season is well underway, with Golden Globe nominees recently announced, and several film critics' associations having named their top films of the year. Oscar nominations will be announced Jan. 22.

5 Geek chic

Large glasses, long socks and checked shirts have been spotted on the likes of pop star Madonna and Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz, heralding a fashion trend to take fashionistas by storm next year, [femalefirst.co.uk](#) reports.

6 Another celebrity designer?

Katy Perry may start a fashion line, E! News Online reports. The singer says she's always experimented with clothes and cites model Agyness Deyn and burlesque star Dita Von Teese as her fashion icons.



7 Scarlett exposure

Actress Scarlett Johansson has been all over the place lately, first co-hosting the Nobel Peace concert on Dec. 11, then slamming Cosmopolitan U.K. magazine for printing an interview with her she says she never gave, and now comes news she's thinking about putting out another album.

FRIDAY

CA	Vu	SC	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
cable variety	243	317	3	CFCN	etalk (N)	Hollywood News	Rita MacNeil's Christmas	Eight Days to Live (2006, Drama)	Kelly Rowan. (DVS)	News (N)	News (N)
	-	-	4	OMNI	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News	The Simpsons	King	Metropia	20/20
	-	371	5	KXLY	4 News at 6	4 News at 6:30	Entertainment	The Insider (N)	Wife Swap	Supernanny	The Hour
	245	306	6	CBRT	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Secret of the Nutcracker (DVS)	Little Mosque	CBC News: The National	The National	News Hour
	244	338	7	CICT	ET Canada	Entertainment	90210 (HDTV)	NUMB3RS "Frienemies"	Life "Trapdoor" (N)	News Hour	Your City
	246	-	8	CKAL	Law & Order: SVU	Friends	Friends	Crusoe	Friends	Friends	NUMB3RS
	-	372	12	KREM	News (N)	Hollywood	The Doctors (N)	Ghost Whisperer (N)	NUMB3RS "Tabu"	NUMB3RS	Vicar of Dibley
	-	374	14	KSPS	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Wash. Week	McLaughlin	Bill Moyers Journal (N)	Dateline NBC	Don't Forget the Lyrics!	News (N)
	-	370	16	KHQ	News (N)	Be-Millionaire	Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel-Fortune	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?	CBC News: The National	fifth estate
	-	373	22	KAYU	The Simpsons	Raymond	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	CBC News: The National	Larry King Live	Cooper 360
family sports	502	390	15	CBC	CBC News: The National	Larry King Live	Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)	News	CTV Newsnet	News	News
	500	500	29	CNN	Larry King Live	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News
	501	391	52	CTV	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	News
	400	400	21	TSN	Junior Hockey	SportsCentre	Curling 2008 Continental Cup -- Men's Team Competition. From Camrose, Alta. (Live)	Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Connected	Ult. Fighter	Dark Oracle
	408	418	27	net	NHL Hockey Chicago Blackhawks at	Calgary Flames. (HDTV) (Live)	Christmas With the Kranks ** (2004, Comedy)	Wizards-Place	The Christmas Star (1986, Drama)	Smallville "Fracture"	(10:03) "Twas the Night ** (2001)
	-	-	18	CHTV	The Insider (N)	E News	Inside Hollywood	Momma's Boys	20/20 (HDTV)	News (N)	News (N)
	603	561	25	FOOD	Chef Abroad	The Wild Chef	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Ace of Cakes	Challenge	Chef Abroad
	615	520	26	A&E	CSI: Miami "Game Over"	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	The Best Years (DVS)	The Guard "Live Free"	Testees	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams
	617	522	32	SHOW	EastEnders	Little Britain	Alcatraz: Living Hell	Daily Planet	Man vs. Wild	MANswers	GameTrailers
	520	505	35	DISC	Man vs. Wild (N)	UFC Fight Night	NCIS "Boxed In"	Shockwave	Ultimate Engineering	Ax Men	The Hills
news	628	584	43	SPIKE	Ultimate Engineering	NCIS "Boxed In"	Shockwave	Ultimate Engineering	Ax Men	The Hills	The Hills
	522	516	45	HIST	Ultimate Engineering	NCIS "Boxed In"	Shockwave	Ultimate Engineering	Ax Men	The Hills	The Hills
	581	566	102	MTV	Whitney: From The Hills to The City	The Hills	After Show	Cribs	A Double Shot of Love	The Hills	The Hills
	243	317	3	CFCN	Conversation-Prime Minister	Playing House (2006, Romance-Comedy) (DVS)	Law & Order: SVU	News (N)	News (N)	News (N)	News (N)
	-	-	4	OMNI	Omni News: Mandarin	My Wife Is a Gambling Maestro (2008, Comedy) Nick Cheung.	Trendy Zone	Word for Word	Chinese Rest.	Chinese Rest.	Chinese Rest.
	-	371	5	KXLY	4 News at 6	The Insider (N)	Entertainment Tonight	I Want a Dog-Charlie Brown	Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat (2003, Comedy)	HNIC -- After Hours	HNIC -- After Hours
	245	306	6	CBRT	NHL Hockey	Santa Claus Parade	Doc	Painkiller Jane	Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
	244	338	7	CICT	Survivorman (DVS)	Crusoe (HDTV) (N)	Operation Smile Free surgery.	Too Cool for Christmas (2004, Comedy-Drama)	Elf *** (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, Bob Newhart.	48 Hr. Mystery	The City Show
	246	-	8	CKAL	Survivorman (DVS)	Crusoe (HDTV) (N)	Operation Smile Free surgery.	Too Cool for Christmas (2004, Comedy-Drama)	Elf *** (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, Bob Newhart.	48 Hr. Mystery	The City Show
	-	372	12	KREM	News (N)	Time Life	May-December	Time Goes By	(9:05) Annie Hall **** (1977, Comedy)	Faith Hill, Joy	Faith Hill, Joy
cable variety	-	374	14	KSPS	The Lawrence Welk Show	DTV: Ready?	CSI: NY "YoungBlood"	Crusoe (HDTV) (N)	WWE Tribute to the Troops (N)	Law/Ord SVU	Law/Ord SVU
	-	370	16	KHQ	News (N)	Top Chef	Behind Scenes	Behind Scenes	Dr. 90210 (N)	Challenge	Top Chef
	-	373	22	KAYU	Boston Legal	Top Chef	Kitchen Nightmares	The Sopranos (HDTV)	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami
	502	390	15	CBC	Sat. Report	Mansbridge	Christmas Confidential	Cops	America's Most Wanted	News (N)	News (N)
	500	500	29	CNN	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley Breaks the News	Special Investigations	Special Investigations	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley	D.L. Hughley
	501	391	52	CTV	CTV Newsnet-Scott Laurie	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet
	400	400	21	TSN	(6) NFL Football Baltimore Ravens at Dallas Cowboys.	Curling 2008 Continental Cup -- 'B' Skins Competition.	The Ultimate Fighter	Saturday Night Poker	Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Con.
	408	418	27	net	English Premier League Soccer Teams TBA.	The Christmas That Almost Didn't Happen	National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)	Inside Hollywood	E News	E News
	552	543	20	YTV	Red-Nosed Reindeer	That's-Raven	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Han. Montana	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)
	557	541	39	FAM	Natural-Sadie	Flight 29 Down	That's-Raven	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Han. Montana	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)
family sports	-	-	18	CHTV	E News	The Soup	Behind Scenes	Behind Scenes	Dr. 90210 (N)	Challenge	Top Chef
	603	561	25	FOOD	Top Chef	Kitchen Nightmares	The Sopranos (HDTV)	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami
	615	520	26	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	Trailer Park	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	His and Her Christmas (2005, Comedy-Drama) Paula Devicq.	Sin City	Sin City
	617	522	32	SHOW	TBA	Trailer Park	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	His and Her Christmas (2005, Comedy-Drama) Paula Devicq.	Sin City	Sin City
	520	505	35	DISC	Canada's Worst Driver	Criss Angel	Criss Angel	Criss Angel	Canada's Worst Driver	Criss Angel	Criss Angel
	628	584	43	SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Boyz n the Hood *** (1991, Drama)	Larry Fishburne.	CSI: Crime Scn
	522	516	45	HIST	In Search of Santa Claus	NCIS "Silver War"	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show
	581	566	102	MTV	MTV News	After	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show
	243	317	3	CFCN	Corner Gas	Corner Gas	The Rankin Family Reunion	Would Be Kings (2008, Crime Drama) (DVS)	News (N)	News (N)	News (N)
	-	-	4	OMNI	Without a Trace	King	Chinese Rest.	Bollywood Boulevard	Foreign Domestics: Right	Chardi Kalaa	Chardi Kalaa
cable variety	-	371	5	KXLY	News	Storm Stories	Funniest Home Videos	Extreme Makeover: Home	Extreme Makeover: Home	Housewives	Housewives
	245	306	6	CBRT	Mickey-C'mas	Grinch-C'mas	National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989, Comedy)	Extreme Makeover: Home	Extreme Makeover: Home	Housewives	Housewives
	244	338	7	CICT	16:9 Picture	American Dad	ReGenesis "China"	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad
	246	-	8	CKAL	Murdoch	2Half Men	According-Jim	According-Jim	According-Jim	Less-Kind	Less-Kind
	-	372	12	KREM	News (N)	60 Minutes	60 Minutes	Million Dollar Password	Cold Case "Wings" (N)	The Unit	The Unit
	-	374	14	KSPS	Spain ... On the Road Again	Nature (HDTV) (DVS)	Masterpiece Contemporary (DVS)	Best Sports	Law & Order: SVU	CSI: NY	CSI: NY
	-	370	16	KHQ	(6:15) NFL Football Carolina Panthers at New York Giants.	To Be Announced	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)
	-	373	22	KAYU	House "Daddy's Boy"	Princesses of the World	Charles Other Mistress	CBC News: Sunday Night	Princesses	Princesses	Princesses
	502	390	15	CBC	CBC News: Sunday Night (N)	Newsroom	D.L. Hughley Breaks the News	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley	D.L. Hughley	D.L. Hughley
	500	500	29	CNN	Larry King Live	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet
news	501	391	52	CTV	CTV Newsnet-Scott Laurie	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet
	400	400	21	TSN	(6:15) NFL Football Carolina Panthers at New York Giants.	World Combat League	World Combat League	Sportsnet Connected	Poker	Poker	Poker
	408	418	27	net	Best Damn Red Bull Air Race	World Combat League	SpongeBob	Mystery Hnt.	The Next Star	Falcon Beach	Falcon Beach
	552	543	20	YTV	Jack Frost ** (1998, Fantasy) Michael Keaton.	Life Derek	Han. Montana	Jack Frost ** (1998, Fantasy)	FANatival	FANatival	FANatival
	557	541	39	FAM	Natural-Sadie	Flight 29 Down	That's-Raven	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Han. Montana	Jack Frost ** (1998, Fantasy)
	-	-	18	CHTV	Greatest Myst.	Greatest Myst.	Extreme Makeover: Home	His and Her Christmas (2005, Comedy-Drama)	12 Days of Cookies	Dinner Imposs.	Dinner Imposs.
	603	561	25	FOOD	Iron Chef America	In Search of Perfection	CSI: Miami "Born to Kill"	CSI: Miami "Nailed"	CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami	CSI: Miami
	615	520	26	A&E	CSI: Miami "Kill Switch"	Star Trk: Cntct	Trailer Park	The Guard "Waheguru"	Christmas Caper (2007, Comedy-Drama) Shannen Doherty.	The Island	The Island
	617	522	32	SHOW	Dark Fellowships: The Vril (N)	MythBusters	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scn	CSI: Crime Scn
	628	584	43	SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Battlefield Mysteries	NCIS "Switch"	The Worst Jobs in History	Gosford Park *** (2001, Mystery)	Cribs	Cribs
cable variety	522	516	45	HIST	Battlefield Mysteries	NCIS "Switch"	The Worst Jobs in History	Gosford Park *** (2001, Mystery)	Cribs	Cribs	Cribs
	581	566	102	MTV	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show
	243	317	3	CFCN	Corner Gas	Corner Gas	The Rankin Family Reunion	Would Be Kings (2008, Crime Drama) (DVS)	News (N)	News (N)	News (N)
	-	-	4	OMNI	Without a Trace	King	Chinese Rest.	Bollywood Boulevard	Foreign Domestics: Right	Chardi Kalaa	Chardi Kalaa
	-	371	5	KXLY	News	Storm Stories	Funniest Home Videos	Extreme Makeover: Home	Extreme Makeover: Home	Housewives	Housewives
	245	306	6	CBRT	Mickey-C'mas	Grinch-C'mas	National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989, Comedy)	Extreme Makeover: Home	Extreme Makeover: Home	Housewives	Housewives
	244	338	7	CICT	16:9 Picture	American Dad	ReGenesis "China"	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Family Guy	American Dad
	246	-	8	CKAL	Murdoch	2Half Men	According-Jim	According-Jim	According-Jim	Less-Kind	Less-Kind
	-	372	12	KREM	News (N)	60 Minutes	60 Minutes	Million Dollar Password	Cold Case "Wings" (N)	The Unit	The Unit
	-	374	14	KSPS	Spain ... On the Road Again	Nature (HDTV) (DVS)	Masterpiece Contemporary (DVS)	Best Sports	Law & Order: SVU	CSI: NY	CSI: NY

SATURDAY

CA	Vu	SC	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/20/08	243	317	3	CFCN	Conversation-Prime Minister		Playing House (2006, Romance-Comedy) (DVS)		Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
	-	-	4	OMNI	Omni News: Mandarin		My Wife Is a Gambling Maestro (2008, Comedy) Nick Cheung.		Trendy Zone	Word for Word	Chinese Rest.
	-	371	5	KXLY	4 News at 6	The Insider (N)	Entertainment Tonight		I Want a Dog-Charlie Brown		Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat (2003, Comedy)
	245	306	6	CBRT	NHL Hockey		NHL Hockey Chicago Blackhawks at Vancouver Canucks. (HDTV) (Live)		HNIC -- After Hours		
	244	338	7	CICT	Santa Claus Parade		Doc	Painkiller Jane	Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
	246	-	8	CKAL	Survivorman (DVS)		Crusoe (HDTV) (N)	Too Cool for Christmas (2004, Comedy-Drama)		The City Show	
	-	372	12	KREM	News (N)	Time Life	Operation Smile Free surgery.		Elf *** (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, Bob Newhart.		48 Hr. Mystery
	-	374	14	KSPS	The Lawrence Welk Show		May-December	Time Goes By		(9:05) Annie Hall *** (1977, Comedy)	
	-	370	16	KHQ	News (N)	DTV: Ready?	CSI: NY "YoungBlood"		Crusoe (HDTV) (N)	WWE Tribute to the Troops (N)	
	-	373	22	KAYU	Boston Legal		House	Cops	Cops	America's Most Wanted	
news	502	390	15	CBC	Sat. Report	Mansbridge	Christmas Confidential		Sat. Report	Weekend	Sat. Report
	500	500	29	CNN	Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley Breaks the News		Special Investigations	Larry King Live	D.L. Hughley
	501	391	52	CTV	CTV Newsnet-Scott Laurie		News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet	News
sports	400	400	21	TSN	(6) NFL Football Baltimore Ravens at Dallas Cowboys.				Curling 2008 Continental Cup -- 'B' Skins Competition.		
	408	418	27	net	English Premier League Soccer Teams TBA.				The Ultimate Fighter		Saturday Night Poker
family	552	543	20	YTV	Red-Nosed Reindeer		The Christmas That Almost Didn't Happen		National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie		
	557	541	39	FAM	Natural-Sadie	Flight 29 Down	That's-Raven	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Han. Montana	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002)
cable variety	-	-	18	CHTV	E News	The Soup	Behind Scenes	Behind Scenes	Dr. 90210 (N)	Inside Hollywood	
	603	561	25	FOOD	Top Chef		Kitchen Nightmares		The F Word	Challenge	
	615	520	26	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		The Sopranos (HDTV)		The Sopranos (HDTV)	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	
	617	522	32	SHOW	TBA	Trailer Park	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	His and Her Christmas (2005, Comedy-Drama) Paula Devicq.		Sin City
	520	505	35	DISC	Canada's Worst Driver		Criss Angel	Criss Angel	A Haunting		Canada's Worst Driver
	628	584	43	SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		Boyz n the Hood *** (1991, Drama)		Larry Fishburne.
	522	516	45	HIST	In Search of Santa Claus		NCIS "Silver War"		Ancestors	Ancestors	Gangs of New York *** (2002)
	581	566	102	MTV	MTV News	After	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	MTV Live

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



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Weekend, December 19-21, 2008

36 movies & entertainment

The bestselling albums at Amazon.ca

1. And Winter Came, Enya; 2. A Winter Symphony, Sarah Brightman; 3. Sugar Mountain: Live, Neil Young. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Music

Tuning out holiday cheer

SoundCheck

Alan Cross

alan@ongoinghistory.com

If you're anything like me, you're close to ODing on Christmas music treacle. I tried to get some shopping done the other day, but after hearing Jose Feliciano sing Feliz Navidad yet again, I suddenly realized that I'd rather blowtorch my own toes off than be subjected to more of the same dusty holiday music that's been making the rounds since Coca-Cola invented Santa Claus in the 1920s.

With that in mind, here's another list of decidedly non-traditional holiday songs that really should be more popular:

• **Police Nabbed My Dad/Bobnoxious:** This London, Ont., group has been sending me Christmas songs for the last couple of years and I've loved 'em all. Noth-



Bobnoxious do their best to avoid the Christmas spirit with *Police Nabbed My Dad*, sung to the tune of Feliz Navidad.

ing like a song about your dad being sent to jail set to the tune of the aforementioned Feliz Navidad. Get it at bobnoxiousrock.com.

• **Joseph, Better You Than Me/Killers feat. Elton John:** When I spoke to Brandon Flowers last month about their third Christmas single, guitarist Dave Keuning was in another suite in Toronto's Pantages hotel laying down the final guitar tracks. Brandon says that Joseph doesn't get the credit he should for his role in the Christmas story and this song attempts to address

that. Listen for Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys to sweeten the vocals about halfway through. Proceeds to Bono's (RED) foundation. Available on: iTunes.

• **Santa Claus Is Coming to Town/BWC Christmas Orchestra:** If you liked Springsteen's take on this one, you might want to stay away from the near death-metal vocals of this version. Available on: BWC Studios Presents: A Very Metal Christmas.

• **Oh Little Town of Bethlehem/Killdozer:** Definitely not the kind of thing you'll

I'd rather blowtorch my own toes off than be subjected to more of the same dusty holiday music that's been making the rounds.

want to play when grandma comes over for Christmas dinner. A bit dysfunctional, to put it mildly. Available on: Hardcore Holiday

• **(We Wish You) A Protein Christmas/The Fall:** I have no idea what Mark E. Smith is going on about, but the mere fact that he wrote a Christmas song is staggering. Not to be mistaken for a hymn, then. Available on: NO HO HO: Alternative Indie Christmas Anthems, Volume 1.

• **Christmas Is Going to the Dog/Bels:** A deceptively happy sounding song from son of the physicist who invented the Many Worlds Theory.

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at ongoinghistory.com and exploremusic.com.

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Swift tops the charts

Teen country star Taylor Swift reclaimed her crown on the U.S. pop album charts this week. Swift's second release, *Fearless* rose one place to the top after selling 249,000 copies during the week ended Dec. 14. **REUTERS**


movies&entertainment **37**
Music
Metro recommends
• AMADOU & MARIAM, WELCOME TO MALI:

African couple deftly blends their musical roots with a myriad of modern styles for a superb new and original sound.


• THE FLAMING LIPS, CHRISTMAS ON MARS:

Film score mixes ominous electronic soundscapes and fanciful strings for a healthy dose of engaging weirdness.


• WE WISH YOU A METAL XMAS AND A

HEADBANGING NEW YEAR: Old-school rockers blast through boring holiday standards with metal sounds that are both ferocious and fun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES


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Leading man Jeremy Piven has suddenly split from the critical and commercial hit Broadway revival of David Mamet's Speed-the-Plow, citing doctors' diagnosis that he's suffering a high mercury count, Variety reports. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Inauguration tops Scarlett's wishlist

PEOPLE Scarlett Johansson stopped by The Tonight Show with Jay Leno this week and told Jay what she's asking Santa for this Christmas.

The 24-year-old actress, who is an outspoken Barack Obama supporter, expressed her desire to attend the Inaugural Ball, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

"From Santa I would like a ticket to the Inaugural Ball," she says. "That's what I want Santa."



MSN.COM

'No need for money': Emma

PEOPLE Emma Watson has "no need for money in her life," femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

The Harry Potter actress — estimated to be worth £13 million — says, "The wealth side of it hasn't hit me yet because I have no need for money in my life. My life will not be motivated by money."

The 18-year-old also insists she has not adopted a lavish lifestyle, and still uses public transport.

"I have a more normal life than people expect," she told USA Today. "People are like, 'That girl looks like the girl from Harry Potter, but it can't be her on the train.'"



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jolie and Pitt say no to TV

PARENTING When the holiday season rolls around, Brad Pitt says he and Angelina Jolie aren't big spenders for their brood of six, preferring making crafts to giving pricey presents, people.com reports.

"We do exchange gifts, although we don't feel any pressure to make them big or expensive gifts," Pitt, 44, tells Hello! magazine.

Yet with their luxe lifestyle, how do the youngsters avoid craving tons of holiday loot? By nixing TV.

"The kids don't ask for the big gifts for the reason that they don't see a lot of the American cartoon television,

which is packed with all those manipulative commercials for big toys that look so fantastic," says papa Pitt.

"When they do see that stuff is when they start asking for the toys, so we figure if they don't see them, they won't know they're there. So we have gifts, but we try to keep the money spent to a minimum."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Whitney's stepmom sues over dad's cash

LEGAL Whitney Houston is being sued by her stepmother for allegedly ignoring the wishes of her late father, femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

In the lawsuit filed in a federal court in Newark, the 45-year-old singer is accused of improperly keeping the proceeds of her dad John Houston's \$1-million insurance policy.

Whitney's stepmother Barbara Houston claims the money was meant to pay off the \$723,000 mortgage on John's Fort Lee condominium, in New Jersey, where she still lives.

Whitney holds the mortgage on the property. John died from car-

diac arrest in 2003, aged 82.

Barbara also claims her late husband wanted the remaining insurance money to go to her.

Lawyers for Whitney and her stepmother declined to comment on the lawsuit.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Jodie's relapse led to custody woes?

PEOPLE A judge made a temporary ruling Wednesday that Jodie Sweetin's custody over eight-month-old daughter Zoie must only be in Sweetin's parents' home (where she currently lives) or in her parents' presence, people.com is reporting.

The judge made his ruling after Sweetin recently underwent an emergency investigation by an Orange County, Calif., family court for allegations of substance abuse raised by her estranged husband.

Her estranged husband, Cody Herpin, tells PEOPLE that his "main concern" is to "keep Jodie clean and safe."

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS



Herpin's lawyer, Robert Benavente, tells PEOPLE the reason for the investigation of Sweetin is "primarily alcohol [abuse] but there's also concern regarding methamphetamine."

Sweetin's lawyer strongly denies the claims. "Jodie absolutely has not relapsed into using meth," Wilma Presley tells PEOPLE. "She merely confessed to having several glasses of wine over dinner recently and felt guilty about that. She is currently in a 12-step program and is working hard on her sobriety. She wants to be clean and sober from everything."

The next hearing in the custody matter is set for Feb. 9.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Depp ready to marry longtime partner?

RELATIONSHIP Johnny Depp has reportedly bought an engagement ring for partner Vanessa Paradis, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 45-year-old actor asked a high-end California jewellery store to close to the public so he could privately choose a ring for Vanessa, who he has been dating for 10 years.

A source told America's OK! magazine: "This was Johnny's third or fourth visit to the store."

"He looked at an assortment of classic solitaire diamond rings in platinum settings — a really beautiful selection of elegant and understated rings

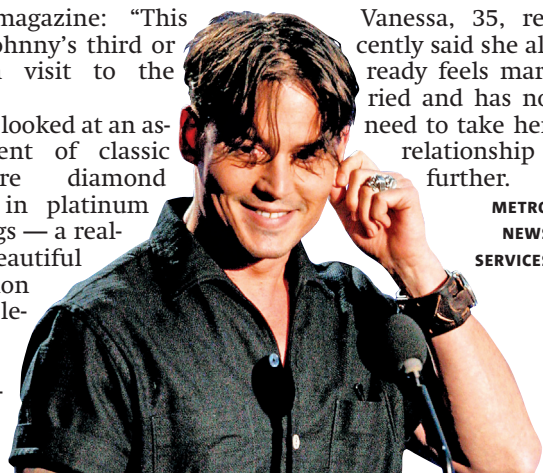
and made a very large purchase."

Johnny — who has two children, Lily Rose, nine and Jack, six, with Vanessa — has previously insisted he and the French star have no desire to marry.

The 45-year-old actor once claimed: "I don't feel like I need a piece of paper that says I own her and she owns me."

Vanessa, 35, recently said she already feels married and has no need to take her relationship further.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



No more kids, Smith insists

CHILDREN Will Smith doesn't want any more kids, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 40-year-old actor and wife Jada Pinkett Smith — who raise three children together — are instead looking forward to becoming grandparents.

Will said: "Jada and I sat down and asked, 'Where do we see ourselves (in 40 years)?' ... We don't have more children — we have grandchildren."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Moss making sexy lingerie

CAREER Kate Moss is set to design and model a range of sexy lingerie, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The British beauty has extended her contract with U.K. high street fashion chain Topshop for another three years and can't wait to start work on the new lines — which also includes a range of shoes — due in March.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Taylor talks after tooth surgery

PEOPLE It takes more than having her wisdom teeth removed to keep down Taylor Swift, people.com reports.

The singer has been blogging through the pain, keeping fans posted on her recovery. And the pain? "I'm feeling it," she wrote.

"[When] I got my wisdom teeth taken out, [I] went into a never-ending sleep," she wrote, thanking her fans for their support. "You gave me something really wonderful to wake up to."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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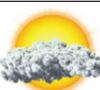
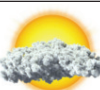
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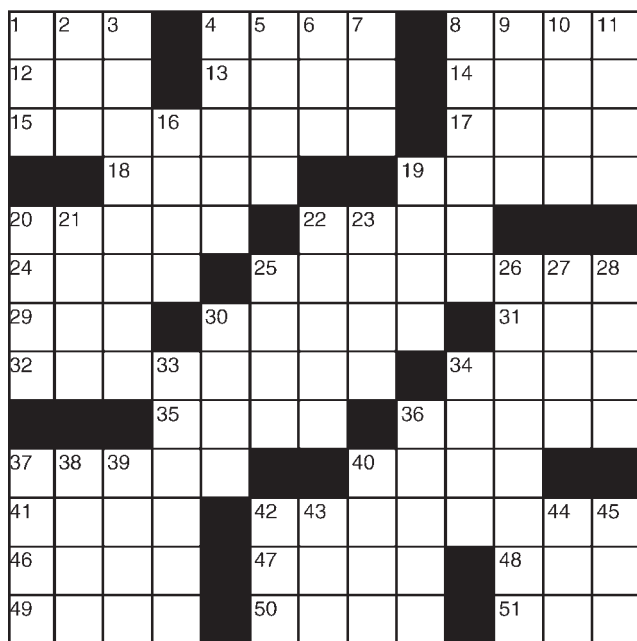
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**Crossword across**

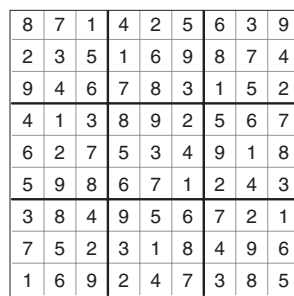
- 1 Spasm
4 Greenish-blue
8 — Bader Ginsburg
12 Historic time
13 Mandlikova of tennis
14 Birthright barterer
15 Gilligan, notably
17 Immediately upcoming
18 Veer
19 Bullwinkle's foe
20 Emulate da Vinci
22 Sketch
24 Shrek is one
25 Us
29 25-Across, e.g.
30 Corridors

- 31 Lubricant
32 Courtroom punishment
34 They give a hoot
35 Forest trek
36 Breathlessness?
37 Bottom point
40 Detail, for short
41 Out of the storm
42 Unable to show versatility
46 Czech or Pole
47 Session with a shrink
48 Vast expanse
49 Stevenson villain
50 Make — meet
51 X rating?

Crossword down

- 1 Sleuth, for short
2 A Gershwin brother
3 Rigid
4 Graph
5 Exhibit ennui
6 Literary collection
7 Aye undoer
8 Fame
9 Addict
10 Urban transport
11 Shacks
16 Melody
19 Ovine vocabulary
20 Spacecraft compartments
21 Chills and fever
22 "La — Vita"
23 Legislation

- 25 Tug hard
26 Sad
27 Marathon fraction
28 "Born Free" lioness
30 Estate recipient
33 Rob
34 Mostly Mideastern cartel
36 Mimics
37 Doggerel Ogden
38 Partner in crime
39 Out of play
40 Tater
42 Commonest English word
43 Thither
44 Witness
45 Erstwhile M&M's hue

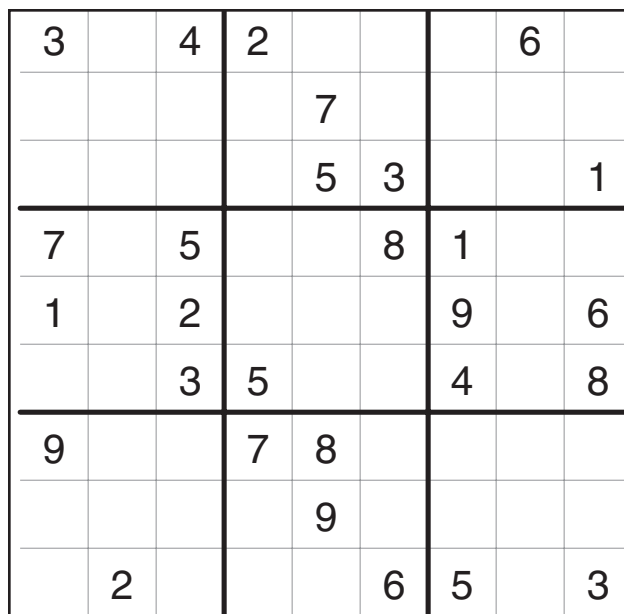
PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca**SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:**

Under 13 minGenius
13-17 min.....Scholar

17-21 minSmart
21-25 minNot bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

**Metro Recipe of the Day****Halibut Steaks with Tomato and Bell Pepper Salsa****INGREDIENTS:**

4 halibut steaks, about 5 ounces each
4 tbsp (60 mL) extra-virgin olive oil
Fresh juice of 1 small orange
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 orange, cut into wedges, to garnish
2 medium plum tomatoes, seeded and diced
1/2 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
1/2 red onion, finely chopped
Fresh juice of 1 small orange
1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped fresh basil
1 tbsp (15 mL) balsamic vinegar
1 tsp (5 mL) sugar
Salt and fresh-ground pepper

METHOD:

1. Place halibut steaks in shallow glass bowl. Mix together oil, orange juice, garlic, salt and pepper to taste, and spoon over fish steaks; set aside.

2. For salsa, put tomatoes, bell pepper, red onion, orange juice, basil, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper to taste in medium bowl and stir. Spoon into serving bowl and chill until needed.
3. Heat lightly-oiled, ridged cast-iron grill pan or skillet over high heat. Place fish steaks on grill pan or in skillet and fry, basting from time to time with oil mixture, until fish just flakes easily, 2 to 3 minutes on each side
4. Place fish steaks on warm serving plates and grind black pepper over. Garnish with orange wedges and serve with salsa.

SERVES 4**rd.ca**

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

**Horoscopes****AVATAR VENUS****ARIES****MARCH 21-APRIL 20**

A trustworthy person has remarkable news. A disturbance can produce a warning. You'll want to escape from a weird dilemma.

**TAURUS****APRIL 21-MAY 21**

Reorganize a sluggish system right away. A threat will jog somebody's memory. You can get ahead by leaving a sad place.

**LIBRA****SEPT 23-OCT 23**

A disagreement about benefits will lead to teasing. A friend will happily agree to make changes. A separation leads to a breakthrough.

**SCORPIO****OCT 24-NOV 22**

Show your support when a relationship begins. An eccentric person is making a big mistake. A friend causes a hullabaloo.

**GEMINI****MAY 22-JUNE 21**

An amiable manner influences a realist. Don't count your blessings in public. You shouldn't push optimism to a cynical person.

**SAGITTARIUS****NOV 23-DEC 21**

Some people will be switching partners. By not worrying, you can correct a problem. Yield to the facts, no matter what happens.

**CANCER****JUNE 22-JULY 22**

A prosperous guy needs medical attention. Shabbiness will not be acceptable to a lady. Don't be a fool when crossing a street.

**CAPRICORN****DEC 22-JAN 20**

A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

**LEO****JULY 23-AUG 23**

Check your documents carefully. A magnificent man takes the other side in a conflict. Difficulties arise when you are too aggressive.

**AQUARIUS****JAN 21-FEB 18**

Never smirk when someone is discussing their ego. Some mighty odd events will make you flinch. Don't defend your spending with a whiner.

**VIRGO****AUG 24-SEPT 22**

Time passes slowly while awaiting a disclosure. A decent man gives a warning about unreliability. An alarmist rouses the neighbourhood.

**PISCES****FEB 19-MARCH 20**

An ill friend will discuss his personal agony. Your lack of concern is the point of a story. Keep your side of a bargain.



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